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PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION

A Series of Broadcast Talks

BY THE
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To
THOSE WHO DID NOT
'SWITCH OFF'

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PREFACE

This series of talks was given from Daventry [5 GB] and afterwards from the London and the Midland Regional Stations on Sunday evenings. The introductory talk belongs to a previous series, broadcasted from London. Readings from various books were included in these talks, but have been omitted here in the interests of brevity.

The expert must recollect that the fact that the talks were intended to be for the benefit of those unacquainted with psychology, account for their untechnical character. It is difficult to be exact and untechnical, but I trust that no serious inaccuracy has been introduced by my efforts to explain psychological points in a language "understanded of the people."

The conversational style which sometimes reveals itself is due to the original character of the talks. I have thought it better to keep almost entirely to the words in which the talks were delivered, making only verbal emendations here and there. I have attempted throughout to keep near to the psychological standpoint, and when I have departed from it to offer a personal opinion, I have in most cases, I think, indicated the fact.

The publication of these talks was not intended at first, but the very large number of requests I received from listeners, convinced me of the fact that many wished to be able to return to the subject through the medium of print, and in response to those requests, this book in now issued. I should like to take the opportunity of thanking the many correspondents whom I do not know personally for their interest and appreciation.

E. S. WATERHOUSE.

Richmond College,
Surrey.

INTRODUCTION

WHERE PSYCHOLOGY AND RELIGION MEET

PSYCHOLOGY is a very popular science at present, and it is rather dangerous to be popular. On the other hand, some scornful people tell us it isn't a science at all. That depends on what you mean by science. If you limit the term science to studies like those of Chemistry, Physics, or Mathematics, it is not. You cannot put thoughts into a test-tube or find the square root of an emotion! But if we want science to be big enough to cover all our knowledge, we must find room for sciences that deal with mind as well as those which deal with matter. Science, after all, is common sense made exact, and psychology can be that, and can adopt the scientific outlook, standpoint, and method.

Starbuck and Coe, in America, first tried to apply psychology to religion, but James's great book, *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, was that which caught the popular imagination. When James declared that the essence of all religion was "an uneasiness and its solution," many people thought it a threadbare way of

dealing with a great reality. But there is a great deal of truth in what James said. It was psychological evidence that the great fact to which religion witnesses is that man is dissatisfied with himself. Mill said it was better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a pig satisfied. Isn't it true? The pig, well fed, is quite satisfied with himself. That is why he will never be more than a pig. Man is not, and that is why he may always be something more than he is.

His dissatisfaction is Nature's way of spurring him on and upward in spiritual evolution, and moral and spiritual evolution is just as much a natural process as physical evolution. The importance of religion in history has been that it is the instrument used in evolving the most important and the most truly human side of man's nature—the spiritual side. I should like to remind you that religion has done much more to make man what he is to-day than we usually think. It has been the nursery of his arts and sciences. The earliest medical treatment was given by men like the modern "shaman" of the Ural-Altaic races; a man who combines magical, medical and religious functions. Later, the priest was the doctor. The primitive law court was the shrine or sanctuary. Sir James Frazer has shown that kings were originally religious, not military, leaders. Much of the earliest science, especially astronomy, was carried on by the priests. Even Copernicus was a monk.

The priests had, and taught, the first rudiments of education. The earliest art was probably magico-religious. Later it centred in temples and images. Primitive music was connected with worship. The earliest romance was the myth, particularly those about gods and men. The earliest philosophy was concerned with religious questions. The earliest games were celebrated at religious festivals.

Not only is this true, but another striking fact is worthy of mention. I cannot recall any of the world's great thinkers who have not been interested in the problems of religion. The reason is that great thinkers are always interested in the ultimate questions of life, and round these religion centres. Even what seems the simple statement, "God so loved the world," raises all the great problems of thought, namely, what God is, what the world is, and what is the relation between them. I do not say that all great thinkers have been what is popularly called religious men, but they have all thought and thought deeply, on religious topics.

It is then just because of the enormous part that religion plays in men's minds and in the development of the human race that psychology, which has for its province mental life, must take religion into account. In saying this, however, let me protest against the idea that psychology either proves or disproves the truth of religion. Unlike some sciences which lay down rules—

for example, hygiene, which lays down the rules of health—psychology's business is purely descriptive. It just describes what it finds, but it cannot say in any final sense whether it is good or bad. That is the work of ethics. Nor whether it is true or false; that is the work of metaphysics.

For example, I read recently that psychology shows religion to be just a matter of emotion. I don't think it does. But the writer went on to assume that this meant it was not true. Yet even if he were right about religion being feeling, it may be that in feeling we get nearer to ultimate reality than in logic. But apparently that possibility does not occur to him. Sometimes you hear people, who like to make sweeping statements, say prayer is all auto-suggestion. I do not agree; but suppose it were? It shows that prayer concerns only oneself, not God. Yes, but can oneself and God be separated like that? If we live and move and have our being in God, what we call auto-suggestion may be God-suggestion. Psychology cannot say whether it is or not. What then can psychology do in the matter of religion? A familiar quotation runs:

"The proper study of mankind is Man."

Psychology can make the proper study properly studied. In the old days they taught the doctor about drugs, diseases and anatomy; the parson

about dogma, history and languages, and sent them out to deal with men's bodies and souls respectively. Neither need know anything about their minds, apparently! We are changing that. Psychology is taught in the medical schools everywhere, and the theological colleges are following suit. In future our doctors and clergymen are not going to study man and leave his mind on one side.

Psychology then can do something to explain how our minds work. I need not say how important that is to those who teach religion. Let me take an example. The Greeks called man the rational animal, and from Socrates downwards it was held that, therefore, he acted reasonably. This idea underlay the celebrated doctrine that the only motive was pleasure, because that seemed a reasonable motive. So grave philosophers gravely proved that a martyr died for the pleasure of being a martyr! Modern psychology has exploded any such notion. It has shown that motives are at root instinctive and may be unconscious. A man once confessed to me that he could not pass a lamp-post without touching it, and, when it was noticed by a friend, he feebly explained he was interested in cast-iron! He knew he was not, but he had, as we say, to "rationalise" his act. Really he did not know why he did it. I suggested that, as a child playing the game of "Touch wood," he felt safe touching a post, but might have been roughly handled by bigger boys when running between

the posts. That old fear, driven into the unconscious, was his motive. Psychology has shown how many such childhood fears are driven into the underworld of the unconscious and emerge in our nervous dreads and prejudices in adult life. Whether I was right or wrong, at any rate, it helped him enormously.

This is just one example of how psychology can illumine matters. It shows us the place of the instinctive tendencies. We all have the full tally of instincts, though probably some are stronger in us than others. We cannot wholly suppress any of them. It would be a mistake to try. All have their proper place. But instead of suppressing them we can sublimate them, that is, find them another outlet. Everyone, for example, has the parental instinct. Some have no children. Yet shall I say that a scout-master with his boys, or a hospital nurse with her patients, will find an abundant and useful outlet for this instinct? The modern spiritual adviser does not simply say "Thou shalt not." Psychology has shown him how to turn many anti-social tendencies into useful channels, and that is true service to both individual and community.

As regards the work of "ministering to a mind diseased," psychology can take an increasing share. The research of Freud, Jung, and the psychoanalysts has opened out a new way of approach, whatever may be the ultimate verdict upon their theories. Incidentally, I should like

to plead for a better co-ordination of the work of the medical man and the minister. A minister without a medical qualification should not practise psychoanalysis upon patients, and yet I am equally sure that some of the patients need spiritual direction even more than mental healing. Or shall I say that their mental healing will not take place without it? The day may come when there will be a real and useful collaboration between religion and medicine in the unity of healing that at present is lacking.

But in addition to the practical help that psychology can give, there is also the service it can render in helping us to understand better the working of the religious consciousness. It seems to those of us who have followed from the beginnings of the science not so long ago since people looked with much suspicion on the phrase, "the psychology of religion." We can now look back on the results of twenty-five years of its development. Let me mention one or two. Years ago a celebrated writer attacked the mystics as epileptoid degenerates. Their admirers rallied to the defence of mysticism as the only genuine form of religion. The controversy went on for years. But in a lately published book, Prof. Dr. Sanctis, of Rome, speaking as a medical man, declares that it is now possible to distinguish between the genuine mystic and the psycho-degenerate *on psychological grounds*, altogether apart from the results shown in their lives. That is a triumph of psychological-analysis

and a real gain to our understanding of the mystic.

Or, again, asceticism may serve as an example. To many people it seems an unnatural perversion. Where a former age admired the self-torture of the ascetic, the modern generation calls it repulsive. Once more psychology comes in to help us. It shows that to a certain extent asceticism is natural. The hardy, healthy man takes pleasure in what is arduous, and enjoys the rough-and-tumble of life. Youth does not want safety-straps. The appeal of dangerous sports proves that. Youth seeks something much bigger than comfort. That is what the ascetic feels who despises the flesh in his quest for things of the spirit. He knows that the big things of life take heavy toll of our ease, and he is willing to pay the price for what he seeks. All religion involves self-denial. The ascetic often exaggerated his self-denial, but asceticism is not the unnatural practice that it was once thought.

But what of the ordinary man, neither mystic nor ascetic? Psychology has analysed his experience, and in the main divides us into " actives " and " passives." The actives are the leaders, prophets, seers. The passives those who just accept and believe. Probably such nice classifications are a shade too exact. Most of us are neither pure-actives nor pure-passives. Yet it is probable we are more one than the other. The passives have their use. They may not

be outstanding or inspired, but they keep the faith, and they hand it down to the generations to come.

Some of the most interesting work in religious psychology centres round conversion. It seems clear that it is never literally instantaneous. There is always some preparatory work, though there may be a crisis like that of St. Paul going to Damascus. Yet Jung has said that Paul was at heart a Christian before this, and that his persecution of the Church was his attempt to persuade himself he was not. What happens in conversion is not so much that a man gets a new character as that he gets a new order in his old character. The sinner who becomes a saint still has the old impulses, but they are no longer masters but servants, and, as I said just now, they become sublimated, switched off into other directions. Another point is that the normal age for conversion is adolescence. This is partly because at that stage of our life we are, for the first time, sufficiently mentally developed to hold a truly personal opinion and sufficiently free to act for ourselves. But there is another reason. Physical life has come to maturity. The boy or girl is now man or woman. The instincts of maturity carry more energy than is needed for their primary purpose. Perhaps the time for that purpose is not yet at hand. So they are in part sublimated, and in the case of religion may find an outlet in the adoption, with new enthusiasm, of religious faith and activity.

One other point, the justification given years ago by the brilliant pen of William James of the Will to Believe. The question is this: Would you rather chance a mistake to gain truth, or chance missing truth for fear of making a mistake? The truth of religion cannot be proved beforehand. A man must try for himself, take his life in his hand and act. Some say that without proof they cannot believe. They never do believe, for they never get proof. Others say they will believe first and see whether the proof comes. We find that in nearly every case they are satisfied it has come. James imagined a man lost in the mountains in a mist. He has no proof he can find safety, but he knows he will perish with cold if he stays where he is. So he makes his venture and sets out. His faith may justify itself. He may reach safety. If not, he can but perish, as he would in any case. Is it not then better to try?

Thus did the greatest psychologist of our generation look at the problem of religion. If religion holds the truth about man, his duty and destiny, we lose that truth by leaving it alone—lose it inevitably and for ever. If we try, we are not guaranteed beforehand that we shall be satisfied, but at least we may be. Millions before us have been. Shall we then be so afraid of being wrong that we shall lose the chance of being right? That is what James meant by the Will to Believe, not the will to flout reason or to hold to impossibilities, but the will

to try and see if the sequel justifies our venture. I believe that in that analysis James got right to the heart of religion. It represents man's venture upon the unknown seas of life where millions of our fellow-voyagers have ventured and have found what they sought.

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CHAPTER I

WHERE FROM AND WHERE TO: THE BEGINNINGS AND ENDS OF RELIGION

WHAT do we mean by religion? Let me quote some definitions I have heard:—"Religion is doing good to everybody," said one. "Religion," said another, "is believing in God." "Religion means for me the Catholic faith," said a third; whilst another quoted the saying of a modern thinker "Religion is what the individual does with his own solitariness." Those are four very different answers, yet if they don't define religion very clearly they at least show what a great part it plays in life. They show that religion concerns belief and conduct, that it is a matter both of your own inner life and of your relation to other folk. Shall we leave it at that? Why trouble to define it exactly? Those who know need no definition; those who don't are not much helped by one. After all, it is much easier to recognise beauty and to speak truth than to define exactly what we mean by beauty and truth, and so too with religion.

We are to speak about the beginnings of religion. Let us see how differently this matter appears to-day from the way in which it appeared to everybody, learned and unlearned alike, before the days of Darwin and Wallace. In those days man was supposed to have been created full-grown. Therefore, of course, it was assumed that his mind could not have been an unfurnished apartment. The Creator must have stocked the mind of the first man, or men, with certain natural notions. You can imagine what a fascinating task it was for the philosophers of the 17th century, who seriously drew up lists of these simple ideas about God, duty, reward and punishment hereafter, which they thought were put into man's mind at creation. One learned gentleman who evidently knew all about it drew up a list of twenty-three such ideas! These ideas, in so far as they had a religious aspect, were supposed to be the origin of what was called "natural religion," and many people tried to show how much better natural religion was than Christianity or revelation. The heathen religions were thought to have originated in this natural religion of the first man. The fact that they were corrupt was easily explained by the machinations of Satan, who was supposed to be specially active amongst non-Christian peoples! Others, of the school of Rousseau, drew touching pictures of the "noble savage" and persuaded themselves that in his simplicity he was nearer nature than civilised peoples.

So the matter stood, till Darwin published *The Origin of Species*. Then came the deluge. Deluges may often make barren land spring forth into fresh growth, and so did Darwin's epoch-making work. Yet they may also prove harmful, and we are only now slowly correcting two popular mistakes about religion which arose through misinterpreting the idea of evolution.

The first mistake was to assume that religion sprang from barbarous customs and gross superstitions of early man, and hence was a mere survival of cupidity and fear. We need not discuss here the theories of the origin of religion. A word coined by Dr. Otto, the Numinous, that is the mysterious and awe-inspiring, is often used to-day, and it is probably that this " Numinous " side of nature first impressed man to think about the invisible order of things, and surely there is nothing ignoble in that, however ignoble many primitive beliefs and customs may have been! But however lowly the origins of religion, after all, our science and our art, our philosophy and our music all come from the same source. No one thinks less of lovely porcelain because it came from common clay, nor is religion stained by the clay of the pit from which it came.

The second mistake has been much more extensive and mischievous. In reaction against the old idea of man as the rational being, lord of creation, some early evolutionists spoke of man as merely a kind of superior beast, and assumed that his real world and real interests were animal

and material, and that religion was a sort of extra, added if one cared to do so, like dancing or carpentry at school. We are slowly beginning to see better. If one tree in the forest is taller, greater, more outstanding than any other species of tree, it is not enough to say that, after all, it is but a tree growing on the same soil as the others. We should need to pay special attention to its difference from the rest. Man is the outstanding tree in the dense tangled jungle of living things. He is like other creatures; he springs from the same soil, and yet there is a difference, a vast difference.

Take the most savage and primitive race you can find. Here, some say, is man but an inch or so above the level of the beasts. Measure that inch, if inch it be, and you will see it consists in this: For the animal, life is to feed and to breed, but it is never merely this for the lowliest of savages. They, without exception, believe intensely in another world of soul or spirit which pervades the material world. That they conceive such an order crudely, and sometimes horribly, is not to be wondered at. The wonder is that they do conceive it and conceive it so persistently. It is that great fact which for ever marks out man as more than a mere animal. He has, what no other animal has, a mind wider than his material environment.

We have come in this way to a point which it is essential to grasp. We *must* learn to distinguish between the soul and the body of

religion. The body is its creeds, churches, organisation. The soul is this ceaseless sense in us that there is a reality beyond the world of our senses. Every normal human being needs an avenue by which to get away from the world of outward things, and get in touch with the greater invisible world, and needs it because of the very character of the human mind.

There is a story of a man who stood with his back ostentatiously turned towards an earnest street preacher. One of the workers tackled him. "No," he replied, emphatically, "I don't believe a word of it. I'm an atheist—thank God!" Hardly a consistent one, I imagine! Probably no man ever succeeds in entirely shutting that part of his mind which links him with the world beyond the senses, any more than he can wholly ignore the sights and sounds of the outer world. Of course, when we are pre-occupied, the threshold of consciousness, as we say in pyschology, is raised, and we become deaf and blind to things everyone else notices, as when Archimedes is said to have murmured to the soldiers who rushed into his room to kill him, "Don't disturb my circles." Similarly, a man may be so occupied with the world of the senses that he may ignore the world beyond them until at last something happens. It may be the lightning stroke of great and sudden sorrow; it may be some triviality—the "lin-lan-lone" of distant church bells across the moorland, the echo of some old childhood song, the stillness of the

night beneath the star-emblazoned sky—and that other world and all its meaning and mystery at once leaps up in our thoughts.

There are plenty who say they have no belief in Churches, creeds and ritual, but such things are no more religion than are trumpets, jews-harps or saxophones, music. Religion is contact with that something beyond; and we can no more help messages from the greater World stirring our soul, than we can help the messages of sight, touch and so forth, that our senses bring us; for man's mind responds both to the physical and spiritual environment. That is why in everyone, somewhere, lie the roots of religion, even in our stoutest sceptics. In Browning's words:

> "Just as we are safest, there's a sunset touch,
> A fancy from a flower-bell; someone's death,
> A chorus-ending from Euripides,
> And that's enougth for fifty hopes and fears
> As old and new at once as nature's self
> To rap and knock and enter at the soul."

The point, then, is that religion is man's great link with that other world to which his mind introduces him. It is not the only link. Music, art, philosophy, are other avenues that lead to the world beyond the senses, but religion differs from all of these, and in this way. The other avenues are one-way streets. Religion is the up-and-down way. It links the World-Beyond-Sense to us, as well as linking us to it. The other avenues lead us out, but they do not bring

back to us the assurance that religion gives, that this World-Beyond-Sense is the real world, and that it is the abode of the God who cares for man. The other world, that music, art, philosophy give to us, might possibly be but a projection of our own nature, a human invention. Religion gives man the sense of response that assures him that this other world is not the creation of his brain, but a reality, and the greatest of all realities.

One other point remains. What of the ends of religion—where does it lead? Sir James Jeans says that there is no reason astronomy can give why man should not be upon earth in a million million years' time. The year will be longer, and the climate colder—that is all. Man has been on earth, it is reckoned, some 300,000 years. In comparison with a million million, 300,000 bears the same proportion as do a few hours to a normal lifetime of 70 years. How little of its life has the baby less than a day old lived! Yet our generation corresponds to the baby less than a day old, if humanity is to live a million million years. What will humanity attain when it is fullgrown? The thought stupefies us.

In an art exhibition there hung once, side by side, by pure coincidence, two pictures. One was the artist's conception of the ape-man just emerging to humanity, a bestial creature, shambling, half upright. It was called " The Ancestor." Next to it hung a copy of the picture

"Ecce Homo," of Christ on the steps of Pilate's judgment seat. The ancestor and the Man, the descendant! If humanity, in much less than a million years, has so developed, that, from such an ancestor comes such a man, what may be the prospects of man in a million million years? Is man merely to develop more knowledge, more machines, more means of locomotion and communication, or is the vast future development of man to be on the spiritual side, to make him more like God?

Surely the answer is that man's greatest possibilities of development are on the spiritual side! Religion then is that which is to help man onward to the full measure of the development possible for him in an inconceivably long future. That is why religion is the most important power man possesses and a far greater thing than we are apt to recognise. We do not realise the wonders of the sun when idly sunning ourselves, nor the wonder of religion in the trivialities of daily life. Religion marks him off from the animal world as truly man, godlike, not beastlike, and it is the path by which he may ascend to the full realisation of his inheritance as a son of God.

CHAPTER II

"AS A LITTLE CHILD": HOW CHILDREN SEE IT

If you would know how children see it, the "it" being, for the moment, the world in which they live, go down on your knees,—no, not to pray, but to get the size and proportion of things as the child sees them. Every adult who goes back, years afterwards, to the scenes of his childhood, finds that the streets seem narrower, the houses smaller. They have not shrunk, but he has grown, and that amounts to the same thing as Einstein and relativity tell us. The child in the same room as the adult is, relatively, in a bigger room. The cupboard that seems small to the six-foot man is a huge cavern to the child who has not reached three feet. As you walk down the street, you see over the walls into the gardens; the child sees only the wall, and the street is to him a very different place from what it appears to you.

It is exactly the same with the mental and spiritual world of children. It is easy to slip into the assumption that the child's mind and soul must be merely undeveloped copies of our own, and that just as weaker tea is required in

the nursery than in the drawing-room, so the same sort of religious ideas, if diluted and sweetened, serve for children as for ourselves. We are quite sure of our superiority to-day to those terrible Victorians, who forced dogmas and catechisms upon the tender infant mind, with the worst possible results, even though with the best possible intentions. We are confident that an exciting story with a touch of romance and sentiment in it, and not too obvious a moral, is the way to teach religion to the modern child.

Is it? It may be, but do not be too sure. It is a most difficult thing to say what does appeal to children. Despite the text-books on psychology, "the average child" is a myth. Every mother knows that! No woman ever thought her child an average child. Children's tastes differ as much as do those of adults, but we are much more ready to generalise about children than about older folk. Some of the most popular of children's books owe their popularity rather to grown-up folk who admire their cleverness, than to the taste of children themselves. In trying, therefore, to speak of children and religion, we must confess frankly that what may be true in the main, is not necessarily true of every individual child.

Bearing this in mind then, let us ask when the child's religious interests begin. The normal child, as a member of the human race that is, and always has been, religious, is not likely to be a born atheist or sceptic. This natural ten-

dency to religion is often called an instinct, and though strictly speaking there is no specific religious instinct, yet the materials out of which religion develops are inborn in every child.

It is frequently assumed that childhood religion begins when interest in causes leads the child to get some idea of God as the cause of all. What was said in the last chapter about the essence of religion, indicates that such interest in the cause of all things is not really religious. Rather is it the beginnings of science, or of philosophy, which, as Plato said, begins in wonder. Harassed parents find it a short and easy way to say " God made it," because that is the terminus of explanation. Yet if the parents replied that electricity or the " Life-Urge," which some people—since we know nothing about it—now substitute for God, were the cause of all, the child would accept the explanation, but no religious ideas or feelings would be attached to it.

No, surely if the essence of religion is man's touch with the world beyond the senses, every child's mind possesses what is needful for the development of religion, for every child has faith and imagination. To some ears, perhaps, faith and imagination stand for credulity and make-believe, the gateway to the realm of fantasy. Yet rather it is entirely true to say that faith and imagination are powers by which both children and their elders get into contact with the great realities of life.

All reasoned knowledge is like a series of Japanese boxes, one inside the other. However great the series, there is always one at each end unlike the rest. The greatest is contained in no other; the least contains no other. Reasoning depends on a basis of faith, and finishes with faith. The whole of our knowledge comes to us because, as young children, long before we could reason or understand, we accepted what was told us, in faith. We believed first and in time we came to know. If we had believed nothing, we could have learnt nothing. Spiritual knowledge comes exactly in the same way, by believing first, and later coming to understand what we believe, and to sift out the true from the false. The child's inborn power of trust is the basis both of its religion and of the rest of its knowledge. Equally is it true that at the other end of the scale, reason depends on faith. None of the ultimate things can be proved by reasoning. If anyone asks for a proof that God exists, the answer is that it can no more be proved than one can prove that an external world exists, or that you yourself exist. The ultimate things, whether we call them mind, or matter, or God, are experienced, not proved. We know them by faith, not by reason.

Similarly with imagination. Every brilliant scientific hypothesis began with an effort of its author's imagination. The complaint that every historian of the war makes, is that no one amongst

combatants or neutrals alike, had the requisite imagination to foresee the process and issues of war on so vast a scale. Instead of imagination being so much day-dreaming, it is the power that alone is capable of helping men to anticipate the future. True, a child's imagination may be wayward and undisciplined, but it is capable of developing into a great instrument for grasping truth, and what is more, of grasping truth in advance.

The faith and imagination of childhood unite to yield a very true sense of that world beyond sense to which religion reaches out. Because children express their ideas about God and Heaven and so forth, in a naive and material way, we fail to see how much deeper is their sense of the Unseen than their expression of that sense. I once heard a man say that his childhood was embittered because, owing to temperament and upbringing, his was a sceptical mind, even in childhood. His playmates adopted fairy friends, Puck, Queen Mab, Titania, and pretended to talk with them and share secrets. He stood out from the group, a defiant little critic, jeering, " Sillies, there aren't any fairies—it's all made up." The other children shunned him in consequence, and he confessed that at night he often cried himself to sleep because he hadn't a fairy friend, because he ached for the friendship he mocked. Rather prematurely, he had become critical of childhood's way of expressing belief in the world beyond the senses, yet his

heart throbbed and yearned for touch with that world all the same. The depth of the real religious feeling of children is not measured by their quaint way of expressing their ideas about religion.

Another characteristic of children's minds, often reflected in their religious ideas, is that they work, in part at least, on lines similar to the minds of primitive peoples. The American psychologist, G. Stanley Hall, holds that children's play recapitulates the activities of early man. Whether or no this is true of play, it is certain that there is a similarity between the mental processes of children and primitive races. The thought of early man explained natural phenomena by reference to personal agency. To him the woods and trees, the passing cloud and the splashing waterfall were inhabited by spirits. Nymphs, fauns, dryads and fairies still haunt their old abodes in those far corners of the globe where the ways and works of the old world have not yet been driven out by the advance guard of our mechanical and matter-of-fact civilisation. One traveller tells us that none of his African porters would touch his portable wireless set, which he had imprudently set working. All were convinced beyond all persuasion that a devil, indeed many devils, were bottled up within! This notion of the material as impregnated with the spiritual, is the pyschological basis of animism and fetish worship.

Similarly, children find it easier to think in personal rather than impersonal terms of Unseen realities. A case has been recorded of an American boy, brought up in express ignorance of religion. At the age of fifteen he confessed that, though he knew it was wrong, he could not help thinking of a great beneficent, exalted kind of man who made the world and men. The deaf-mute, Monsieur D'Estrella, conceived a "strong man behind the hills who threw the sun up into the sky, puffed the clouds from his pipe, and sent out the wind when he was angry." A little girl, aged eight, once told me calmly, "It isn't fair that God's a man. I'm going to call God a lady." I said that God was not a man or a woman, but a spirit. "What's a spirit?" Rather awkwardly I replied, "Well it is something that is everywhere, but you can't touch it or see it." "I see," she said, "it's like the air. That's everywhere, but you can't see it, or," she added, grasping with her hands, "you can't catch it." "Yes," I said, "it's something like that," and I thought as I said so, how in almost all languages wind, breath, spirit, soul, are kindred terms. My little friend was thinking as her primitive ancestors thought in the "dim red dawn of man."

It is a common mistake to believe that children inherit fear. Prof. J. B. Watson has shown by experiments with new-born babies, that the only inborn fears are those occasioned by a sharp noise or by sudden disturbance of support

or balance. Young children have no natural fear of hideous masks, snakes, spiders, frogs, rats, or any of the other things they are often supposed to fear. All such fears are acquired, and though it is true they are readily acquired, the responsibility rests on us, not on the child, when any child learns such fears. Clearly then religion is not a matter of fear to children, except in so far as unwise adults make it so. There are parents and teachers who forget that mental cruelty is as bad as physical, and those who would not raise a finger to strike a child, can be grossly cruel to the child's mind, by calling upon God's anger to enforce the discipline they are too weak to secure. The reason why many children lose interest in religion at the adolescent stage is usually this, that religion has been used as a means of repression, not of realisation, and therefore is cast aside when the days of emancipation come.

A further point that too often is overlooked, is that children, like their seniors, can appreciate a situation only in so far as they can project themselves into it. We, who are older and more experienced, have a wider range of ability to fit ourselves into other situations and circumstances than have children. Yet the old lady who saw her nephew play football, and remarked that it would be ever so much nicer a game if instead of all trying to seize the ball at once, they would only take turns at having it, had evidently small power of projecting herself men-

tally into a football "scrum." A white man abroad often fails almost dismally to get the native standpoint. So too with children. Jesus is only a name to a child, until the child is able to project himself into the life of Jesus. When he can do so, it often follows that Jesus becomes real as God is not, because His earthly life, His own childhood and boyhood have meaning for the child himself. A child sees the abstract through the concrete. He understands, for example, what mercy means by learning about the Good Samaritan at an age when the famous lines "The quality of mercy is not strained" would be meaningless to him.

On the other hand, we must not be too hasty in assuming that what is a little above the child, as we say—that is, what is not perfectly understood—will not be liked. An adult audience seems sometimes to like talks a little too deep for them. I once lectured on a very technical subject to a very untechnical audience, and came away with the depressing feeling of having missed the mark. The secretary wrote later to say that his members had enjoyed the lecture immensely, but he was afraid they didn't understand it! Children similarly can enjoy what they don't fully understand, because of the power of suggestion. As we said just now, a child's power of appreciating the spiritual world is wider than his power of expressing his ideas of it.

A small, and by no means piously-inclined youngster, was once found reading the great

poetic chapters that close the book of Job. He had but the faintest idea of what they meant, but the grandeur of the translation, the strong stark nouns so rarely qualified by adjectives, the glimpses of the might of nature revealed in these chapters, gave him a sense of awe, and awe is the primary religious emotion. For a similar reason, the favourite hymns of childhood are not all by any means of the martial type with a swinging chorus, or of the sentimental type about little birds in the nest and lambs in the fields. I once asked a group of little girls, aged from ten to fourteen, who came with their schoolfellows to church, to choose two hymns for evening service. After much discussion, they chose "Through all the changing scenes of life" and "There is a land of pure delight." The words seem quite unsuitable for children, yet the rhythm of the tunes, and the suggestion conveyed by the hymns made an appeal apparently. There is nothing strange in this. The appeal of art and poetry is largely that of the suggestion they create. Take as an example, Shakespeare's description of Cleopatra:

> "The barge she sat in, like a burnish'd throne
> Burn'd on the water: the poop was beaten gold;
> Purple the sails, and so perfum'd, that
> The winds were love-sick with them; the oars were silver;
> Which to the tune of flutes kept stroke, and made
> The water which they beat to follow faster,
> As amorous of their strokes. For her own person

It beggar'd all description; she did lie
In her pavilion (cloth of gold of tissue)
O'er-picturing that Venus where we see
The fancy outwork nature; on each side her
Stood pretty, dimpled boys, like smiling Cupids,
With divers-colour'd fans, whose wind did seem
To glow the delicate cheeks which they did cool,
And what they undid did."

The witchery of that wondrous bit of description is the appeal of the suggestion of its metaphor. It is a commonplace truth to say that God is as present in Victoria Street as in Westminster Abbey; yet the suggestion, the atmosphere of centuries of religion, the beauty of the architecture, the space and silence, give even to the chance passer-by who enters the Abbey, a sense of God that does not come as he walks down Victoria Street. An animal is quick to catch the suggestion that comes from the attitude of those around him. Our dog knows when there is sorrow in the home, and shows his sympathy, though he does not know the sorrow. The little child can share in the spirit of religion long before he can grasp its teaching, and that is why the influence of an early training in genuine religion is never and can never be lost.

Psychology is never tired of emphasising the permanence of early impressions. Freud has stated that the chief lines of character are determined by the time the child is five. The undoubted fact that there is, at a time when church attendance is poor, so much common Christianity

in the streets of this country, is due, more than to anything else, to Sunday-schools. A little while ago a rough navvy lay dying. He was a man of sixty-five, whose language and habits were those of his class, far more familiar with the bar than the pew. "I'd like to go out with a prayer," he said. None of his children could pray, and one wanted to fetch a clergyman. "No," said the dying man, "I've lived without parsons and I'll die without them, but if no one will say a prayer I'll do it myself." Closing his eyes and folding his hands, the navvy began "Gentle Jesus, meek and mild," and finished with "Our Father." The incongruous character of the prayer no one noticed. It was the prayer he had learnt in childhood, and the only prayer he had ever known. Such a man is no humbug. It was no coward's cry. Face to face with the last grim reality he went back to his forgotten childhood and his forgotten childhood's God.

Other aspects of childhood religion will be mentioned in later chapters. Simple and quaint though childhood religion appears to us, no psychologist doubts that it is a factor of the utmost influence in after-life not only when it is apparent that it is so, but when outwardly it seems uninfluential. Even if only for the moral values of early training in the later life of the citizen, every Sunday-school teacher is doing work of national importance. It is natural that religion should be learnt in childhood, but

whenever it is learnt, it can be learnt in no other way than the child's way. One whose insight into spiritual truth was unfailing, has said "Except a man receive the Kingdom of heaven as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein."

CHAPTER III

THE SELF WE DO NOT KNOW: UNCONSCIOUS EXPERIENCE AND ITS MEANING

HAVE you ever asked yourself the question—Where are my thoughts when I am not thinking them? Perhaps we ought not to ask such a question, for thoughts are not things like shoes which are in the cupboard when we are not wearing them. Yet a certain thought, we will say, often comes into our mind. In one sense, of course, it is different every time it comes, and yet each time it is sufficiently like its predecessors to be called the same thought. What becomes of it then, when we are not thinking it?

The answer introduces us to a distinction which is easy to grasp. What is directly present to our consciousness at any particular moment is but a small part of our experience. The rest, we say, is subconscious. It is below the threshold of consciousness, but may at any time come up directly to our notice. Some part of our subconscious mind lies near the surface. What is twelve times twelve? The answer is given at once. But what was the name of that man you met on your holiday last year? You hesitate. "Let me see, it began with 'M', didn't it?"

You run over several names beginning with "M." None seems to fit, though one or two seem nearer to being right than others. It is like trying keys to a lock. Some obviously won't turn it. Others nearly do so, but not quite. You give it up. Ten minutes later perhaps, when you are talking about something else, suddenly the name flashes before you. The subconscious mind has not given up the task you gave it, even though your consciousness was directly elsewhere and presently it succeeds. Clearly then, a part of our mind goes on working even when we are not directing its operations.

This fact has been recognised by psychologists for many years, but only within comparatively recent times has a further distinction come to light,—the influence of what is called the unconscious. It is rather confusing, however, that psychology has never settled its terms precisely in regard to this topic. One is reminded of the times about which it is said "In those days there was no king in Israel; every man did that which was right in his own eyes." Every psychologist does that to-day so far as the meaning he attaches to the unconscious is concerned. We may take a similar liberty. I have explained what I mean by subconscious. By unconscious I mean that part of our experience that never comes into our consciousness by any ordinary means. How then do we allege that there is any such thing? Let me try to explain.

Most of us are quite sure we forget a great deal, but many psychologists are by no means so sure. What do we mean by forgetting? Do we mean that what is forgotten is gone utterly and no longer exists, or do we mean we cannot recall it? If I mark a pebble and drop it into the midst of the sea, I am not likely to find it again, but still it is there, and conceivably a wave might throw it up at my feet on the beach. So with anything that has passed through our mind. We forget, and it is unlikely that we shall ever recall a great part of our experience. Yet it is possible it still exists, and conceivably may come back to us, or influence us, even whilst it is forgotten.

When, some fifty years or so ago, the phenomena of hypnotism began to be sifted out, it was found that under hypnotism, a patient might give a clear and accurate account of experiences that he had no knowledge of in his ordinary state. That surely suggests that such experiences, though forgotten, were not wholly lost to the mind. But it is only in recent years, largely owing to the work of Freud and Jung and others, that psychology has come to recognise the place of the unconscious in our lives. Like most new subjects, it has suffered from the overstatements of the too enthusiastic, and perhaps we should remind ourselves that the existence of the unconscious is a hypothesis rather than a demonstrated fact, but it seems a very probable and helpful

hypothesis, and there is plenty of evidence in its favour.

For example, recently I was announcing a hymn which is numbered 426. I gave out 385, and did not notice my mistake till the organist began playing what I knew was not the tune of No. 426. When I got home I took down the old hymn book which was superseded twenty-five years ago. The hymn which is now 426 was 385 in that book. If anyone had asked me its number in the old book, I could not possibly have told what it was, but the old number, forgotten years ago, came out of my unconscious mind. I cannot say why, nor can I remember making such a mistake before, but the fact shows that the unconscious retains what is quite lost from ordinary memory.

An old gentleman I knew, once hid some important papers in a safe spot. A long while after it was needful to produce them in a law-court. He searched the house from top to bottom for three days, and came to the conclusion they had been stolen. It meant that his case would fail, and he would lose a large sum of money. The night before the case was to be heard, he made a last despairing and vain search, and finally went exhausted to bed. He dreamt he was walking down the stairs, felt a board creak loudly, and stooping, found it loose, and beneath it the papers. He woke, and trembling with excitement, walked down

the stairs feeling each in turn. At last he came on one that was loose, and dragging up the board found the missing documents. Even then he could not recollect putting them there, yet his mind had retained the fact unconsciously.

These are examples of the unconscious shooting up some of its hidden contents, as a volcano may shoot up something from its depths. There are ways in which practised psychologists can bring out some of the contents of their patients' unconscious ways which need not concern us now. Dreams not infrequently give indications of unconscious workings, though in this case they are usually disguised in some symbolic form.

Enough has been said to indicate what the term unconscious means, and to suggest some of the ways in which the unconscious reveals itself. Let us see something of its importance. Some psychologists hold that the unconscious dominates consciousness, and speak of unconscious ideas and wishes, and above all of unconscious complexes, which mean clusters of sentiments that have got detached from the perspective of life and being out of focus are mentally unhealthy. Yet to bring an unconscious complex to the surface, so that the patient recognises it, is the method of curing it, and that certainly suggests that consciousness controls the unconscious. It seems paradoxical also that wishes or ideas can be unconscious, for they lose

their character as wishes and ideas when they are unconscious, but we can agree they may remain as tendencies or motives.

If then we can have unconscious tendencies or motives, there is a self that is our own self, and yet is one we do not know. Most of us, like the man in the Gospels, could say "My name is Legion for we are many." As Browning has it:

> "God be thanked, the meanest of his creatures
> Boasts two soul-sides, one to face the world with,
> One to show a woman when he loves her."

We say sometimes, "He doesn't know his own mind." Do any of us ever know our own minds fully? Do we know our own motives? Yet we are forced to pretend that we can always explain our own conduct. When we cannot, we invent an explanation and adopt it, not for the sake of deliberate lying, but for what is called "rationalisation." For example, a small boy once gave vent to an ear-piercing shriek in class. The master at once demanded an explanation, and the boy muttered that he had a pain. He was sent off to the matron at once, and after she had talked to him, he confessed "Perhaps it wasn't a pain. I felt I must just yell. I don't know why, I had to. But you can't say that. All the fellows would call you a fool." A highly intelligent man told me that because of the same wild impulse he had one

day to rush out of a theatre. If any of us have ever experienced any such intense impulse to behave irrationally in some way or other and have not been able to control it, the chances are that we rationalised an explanation to satisfy ourselves or anyone who knew it.

Another case is that of a man who would not set out on a journey unless he carried a pebble, any pebble would do, in his left hand. He explained it by saying it eased him of cramp. Once he allowed himself to be laughed out of it, and during the day his hand was seized with cramp. Doubtless some unconscious motive prompted the use of the mascot, and his rationalisation about cramp actually induced the symptoms. Peculiarities of this kind were once thought semi-insanity. Modern psychology shows that perfectly sane people may exhibit little irrationalities of behaviour owing to unconscious motives.

Even ordinary folk like ourselves seldom know our full motives. Abraham Lincoln confessed he helped the pig out of the ditch, not for the pig's sake, so much as for his own. We sometimes give to beggars for much the same reason. Dr. Crichton Miller says preachers usually preach most against their own sins. If they do, do they realise why they choose those subjects? Even the best of men, doing the best work, which is for the Kingdom of God and the good of their fellows, are sometimes haunted by the fear that self has a share in their

motives. Possibly it has, but if self were the only motive they certainly would be found doing much less noble work.

It is frequently the unpleasant experiences which are driven into the unconscious. Nature has an active method of healing the body, and she heals the mind not merely by the healing hand of time, but by an active tendency to repress the unpleasant. Most of us think of the glorious days of our holidays far more than of the wet days, or the day when the car broke down miles from anywhere. If we do recall the less pleasant adventures, they are not half so bad in recall as in actuality, whereas the pleasant ones lose nothing, but rather gain by recall.

Sometimes, however, this work of smothering the unpleasant into the oblivion of the unconscious is not well done, and then an unconscious complex is set up and shows itself through some nervous breakdown.

Many of the causes of such nervous trouble in later life are due to childhood happenings. Dr. W. H. R. Rivers described in his book, *Instinct and The Unconscious*, a case that has often been quoted, of a young officer who during the war was unafraid of danger, yet terrified of going into a dugout, and who in ordinary circumstances hated to go into a Tube railway, or indeed any enclosed place. Finally it was discovered that, as a boy, he had been attacked in a closed entry by a dog. He had

utterly forgotten the incident, but it had marred the whole of his life. I cannot plead too earnestly that every child should have the happiest and most carefree childhood possible. To say "He'll soon forget" may be true, but what is forgotten is not ungotten. It remains in the unconscious to influence later life.

One who was the greatest of psychologists has said "Judge not that ye be not judged." In judging the motives of others we often unconsciously reveal our own. I once heard a man say that a fellow-townsman had given £1,000 to the local hospital. "You see," he added, "he wants to be Mayor." The man who says a thing of that type shows the character of his own motives pretty plainly. In judging another he judged himself without knowing it.

What we have said must not give the impression that the influence of the unconscious need always be irrational or evil, and though the word complex has come to mean an undesirable cluster of sentiments, there are groups or clusters of sentiments in the mind as wholesome as others are unwholesome. We may not be able to control our unconscious minds, but most of its content passes to it from consciousness, and the mind that thinks cleanly and clearly will create an unconscious that is a help not a hindrance. The universal testimony of religion is that man is in touch with a power higher than himself, and we cannot think that

what is unconscious to us is unconscious to God. The self we do not know is known to Him who "understandeth our thought afar off," and if a man's religion is to mean anything to him, it should be a power whereby he can keep the unconscious mind his ally not his enemy.

It is possible that the unconscious is not purely an individual matter. Some, like William James and W. H. Myers, have thought that it is to this quarter that those intuitions and inspirations that seem to come to us rather than come from us, belong, and that on this side the mind of man links up with the mind of God. There must be some community of minds. Why should millions of people, shall I say, looking at the sun, all see the same thing? The plain man, not knowing the philosophic pitfalls in the way, will say at once "because the sun is there to be seen." Well, suppose it is, why do many million minds see it alike? Why shouldn't some see it as one thing and some as another? That minds do work similarly seems to indicate something common, some link that connects them all, and many philosophers have thought that the interpenetration of human minds by a universal or Divine mind is the explanation of the fact that minds have a common element. If that be so, then it may also be that this interpenetration comes through the unconscious, and the unconscious is the gateway through which God enters into the

mind of man. May we not say in the words of the old marching song, sung as the procession of worshippers stood at the doors of the temple: "Lift up your heads oh ye gates, yea be ye lift up ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in"?

CHAPTER IV

SENSE AND SYMBOLS: THE VALUE OF IMAGINATION

To the ordinary British Protestant who enters a Continental cathedral during the service, the rich symbolism is bewildering. Possibly he worships in some severely plain little chapel, built with strict Puritan simplicity, and he expresses himself impatiently about these elaborate symbols that mean nothing to him. Even so, whether or not he knows it, the studied simplicity of his own little sanctuary and its worship is just as much a symbol. It represents a certain conception of God and of the way of worship. The sober clothing, black, white and russet, which contrasted the Puritan with the Cavalier was a symbol, and as such a symbol Charles Lamb's dainty prose interprets the Quaker dress:

> "The very garments of a Quaker seem incapable of receiving a soil; and cleanliness in them to be something more than the absence of its contrary. Every Quakeress is a lily; and when they come up in bands to their Whit sun conferences, whitening the easterly streets of the metropolis from all parts of the United Kingdom, they show like troops of the Shining One."

Symbolism is woven into the very fabric of mental life. Even the commonest objects are symbols. Words are symbols of ideas, images and emotions, just as much as a flag is the symbol of a country. Colours are symbolic. Red associates with danger, perhaps with courage or strength; white with purity; black with sorrow; green with restfulness or simplicity; yellow with cowardice, though in the East it is often the symbol of poverty. Many people think of musical tones in terms of colour. Even such a commonplace object as an armchair is a symbol of comfort. Our minds are constantly working through and with symbols and so naturally and regularly that we seldom realise how intimately our thought is bound up with symbolism. Anyone, therefore, who professes to be opposed to all symbolism in religion is adopting a position almost impossible to defend; and anyone who thinks that because many religious truths can be expressed only through symbols, they are therefore flights of fancy rather than representations of realities, is deeply mistaken. The most certain and undeniable forms of reasoning—those used by mathematics and logic, are expressed in symbols.

Religion, like art, needs symbols to express its meaning. One reason for the impatience of many religious minds regarding creeds of any kind is that whilst creeds may express approved forms of belief, they never express the living spirit of religion. Would anyone think that even a

creed so old and widely used as the Apostles' Creed gives, as the manger-cradle and the cross have given, the meaning of Christianity? There are truths expressed in symbols which are evaporated the moment one tries to write them down precisely.

It is said that when Milton was a boy at St. Paul's School, the master gave the lads the task of writing an account of the miracle in Cana of Galilee. One can imagine the young hopefuls laboriously scratching away and producing some such sentences as "There was a wedding. There was no wine. They did not know what to do. Jesus turned some water into wine. They all liked it very much," and so on. The boy Milton wrote a single line:

"The conscious water saw its God, and blushed."

Think of the amazing imagination in that rich symbolism! Into that single line Milton's youthful genius put that which no amount of literal description could have given to our minds.

There are at least two reasons why religious truth tends to expression through symbols. One reason is the same as that which makes mathematics employ symbols. They beguiled us in childhood by making us say that if we had two oranges, and some one gave us two more, we should have four, but we soon learnt that two and two were four without asking four what, and when we had done that, we had learnt, though perhaps we didn't know it, that mathematics

deals with what is abstractly and universally true, apart from concrete instances. Religion also deals with that which is true universally and eternally, apart from the ways in which Scriptures, creeds and churches seek to express it. Therefore just as mathematics expresses its truths in symbols that need not refer to any actual instance, so symbols help the religious consciousness to see beneath the actual words and forms which we employ in theology and worship, something of that Reality Beyond the Senses to which all true religion witnesses. The cross as a symbol stands for something which no theory of the Atonement can ever express.

Another reason is supplied by what modern psychology teaches—that dreams are more or less symbolic. Now dreams come from subconscious and unconscious imagination and from the same sphere come also those flashes of insight and intuition that so often lighten our darkness about the problems that perplex us. Symbolism seems a sort of lingua franca of the unconscious and subconscious part of our personality, and it is on this side that the deepest roots of religious feeling grow. Symbols project before our mind what our reasoning powers fail to lay before us. In Wordsworth's phrase:

> "We feel that we are greater than we know"

and our minds are always touching something that they sense but do not grasp. Most of all do we find this in the religious side of life.

It is precisely here that symbols are greater than words. Sight is man's principal sense, but the blind learn so to use touch that by touch they come to know aspects of things that sight never gives. Reason is like sight, symbols like touch, touch with a side of reality that reasoning never really penetrates.

Symbols may be wrong, as may other methods of expressing truth. They may be inadequate or misleading, or, more commonly still, the experience they represent may develop, whilst the symbols remain unchanged. Sometimes this happens through a well-known psychological process, by which the emotions belonging to an experience become attached to the symbol. In course of time they form a protective layer of sentiment around the symbol, which may preserve it too effectually, so that the symbol defies change, though that which it symbolises has changed. A great deal of that which passes as reverence for truth is really reverence for sentiment. Now sentiment is a right and proper thing, but it is one of those good things of which one undoubtedly may have too much.

Scientific doctrines are continually changing —our scientific conceptions have changed much more in the past twenty-five years than our theological conceptions. We regard such changes as advances, but are far too inclined to regard theological changes as defeats, owing to the fact that theological symbols carry far more sentiment than do scientific symbols. As

Professor Whitehead has said: "Religion will not regain its old power until it can face change in the same spirit as does science. Its principles may be eternal, but the expression of those principles requires continued development. This evolution of religion is in the main a disengagement of its own proper ideas from the adventitious notions which have crept into it by reason of the expression of its own ideas in terms of the imaginative picture of the world entertained in previous ages. Such a release of religion from the bonds of imperfect science is all to the good."

Religious teaching is largely a matter of the exchange of symbols and words. Let us put it in this way. Think of one of the great prophets or teachers of any of the world's great religions. In his meditations, or it may be in his inward struggles, spiritual realities lay hold of his soul. These things are to him symbols whose meaning is expressed in the burning words he pours forth, when he comes from the cave as Muhammad came; from the sacred Bo-tree as Gotama the Buddha came; from the wilderness as Jesus came, and gives to men the truths that have embedded themselves in his soul. To his hearers the words are symbols of the spiritual realities he has experienced, however dimly they may grasp those realities. That is what is meant by saying that such teaching is an exchange. The prophet or teacher puts the realities of his experience

into the words they symbolise, the hearers find that the words are symbols which convey to them something of the realities of the prophet's experiences. Those of us who read the Beatitudes find in those short pregnant sentences something, and possibly but a small part of that meekness, that mercy, that hunger and thirst for righteousness, that purity of heart which were what religion meant for Jesus. The words are symbols of the experience of Him who spoke them.

Such symbols are as full of meaning to-day as they were nearly 2000 years ago. Other symbols, as we have said, lose some of their meaning. It is a condition of the existence of religion that it should use symbols, and what is more, should reverence its symbols. Yet equally is it a condition of the progress of religion that it should be free to revise its symbolism lest it should happen that expansion into the new opportunities of the future be prohibited by the mortgage of the past.

What has been said of symbols links naturally with the other part of our subject—imagination —for imagination works through symbols. There is a verse in the book of Proverbs which our older translation renders: "As he thinketh in his heart so is he", which we may paraphrase as The imagination makes the man. Our imagination is a kind of private cinema, and as the type of film that draws the public is a reflection of public taste, so is our own inward

imagery an indication of our own character. Two men see a golden cross in a cathedral. To one it is the symbol of a devotion far more precious than gold, to the other it suggests at once a large sum in sterling. The symbol is read in utterly different ways by two types of imagination, and the imagination reveals the man to whom it belongs.

We are apt to contrast the gossamer threads of fancy with the steel-like bands of fact, yet we might recollect that relatively the spider's web is one of the strongest of nature's devices, and as an Eastern proverb says, a drop of water is soft and weak, but the dropping of water wears away the rocks. The power of imagination is immense, and fancy is often stronger than fact.

But do not let us be too quick to separate fancy and fact. The tendency of all imagination is to influence some fact. It is an inward power which works outward, as do all our mental processes. The earliest ideas we possessed as children were connected with the world outside, and helped us to some kind of action concerning outward things. In other words, we started on the business of thinking to help us in the even more important business of living, and that is what all our thought, even the most profound and abstract thought, ultimately does.

In the same way, imagination is the germ from which action grows. Whatever has passed through our minds will tend, either at the time or afterwards, to influence some action. The

corruption and the consecration of life alike begin in thought. It is probably true that no one does wrong without first thinking wrong.

Imagination, then, is a great practical power. It sometimes seems as if our destiny in life were settled by curious accidents. Such accidents certainly do both open and close paths to us, but apart from the path, there is the direction we take, and the direction of millions of lives springs from imagination first of all.

If you stop to chat with one of the master-men who bring in those steel Goliaths with Samson's strength, Atalanta's speed and their four or five hundred ton load, sliding gently up to the buffer-stops as the clock points to the exact minute, and ask him why he chose that career, as likely as not he will tell you that as a boy he was "mad on engines." Exactly how many careers in all walks of life are determined by boys' and girls' imaginations cannot be calculated, but one may hazard the guess that half of us, at any rate, follow throughout life the calling which appealed to our youthful imagination. Another matter of lifelong moment is dominated by imagination. No lover, worthy of the name, is merely guided by rational and prudential considerations in his or her choice. We fall in love with ideals, and find them embodied in persons. The actuality may not be what the imagination thinks, and yet here again the power of imagination reveals itself, for the very fact that those who love us set us on high,

makes us try to be more like that which they think us, and less like that we know ourselves to be. We have no proverb to express what happens to the dog who gets a good name, but it is likely to double his value, and that others think highly of us, even when they think of us more highly than they ought to think, creates in us something we should not otherwise have or be. Once again imagination is altering the character of life.

We are told that Havelock's sepoys regarded him as superhuman and would fall at his feet and clasp them in ardent worship, and an amusing picture is drawn of that modest warrior kicking his worshippers in embarrassment as he struggled to escape. He was not what they thought him, and yet they would follow him as they followed no other, and fantastic though their imagination was, it made them fine soldiers.

Enough has been said to show that inward imagination is one of the great creative agencies of life. We all realise the creative character of artistic imagination, but we realise less frequently its equally creative function in the lives of all of us. There is very sound psychology in St. Paul's admonition to *think* of the things that are pure, lovely, of good repute and so on, for to think of them is the first step to doing them. Another great psychologist, Plato, knew the same thing, and expressed it as follows:

"It is then, Glaucon, on these accounts that we attach such supreme importance to a musical

education, because rhythm, and harmony sink most deeply into the recesses of the soul and take most powerful hold of it, bringing gracefulness in their train, and making a man graceful if he be rightly nurtured, but if not, the reverse? and also because he that has been duly nurtured therein will have the keenest eye for defects, whether in failures of art or the misgrowths of nature; and feeling a most just disdain for them, will commend beautiful objects and gladly receive them into his soul, and feed upon them, and grow to be noble and good; whereas he will rightly censure and hate all repulsive objects, even in his childhood, before he is able to be reasoned with, and when reason comes he will welcome her most cordially who can recognise her by instinct of relationship, and because he has thus been nurtured."

Plato then held that a musical education, a term which for him included literature as well as music in our sense, fed the imagination so that it produced a noble character, and one that later would recognise reason. The connection he makes between imagination and reason is all important. Imagination should be foresight, insight into facts, a help to the actualities of life. Mere fantasy thinking takes us away from life. The test of prophetic imagination was fact. It is given thus "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the Lord hath not spoken? When a

prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken: the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously, thou shalt not be afraid of him." It is a salutary test.

There is a tendency that seems to be growing to say that after all religion and science move in separate spheres, and that therefore they cannot conflict. In one sense, in the final sense that is to say, this is true. But it does not mean what some seem to think, that therefore any religious belief can be kept as true however impossible it is scientifically. An Indian student who left one of our universities to return to India, told his tutor that in this country he had been taught two truths, religious truth and scientific truth, but that when he got back to India, he would find that truth was one. It is one, and its seamless garment cannot be rent. The last thing but one any great Church should do is to scrap its symbols in panic every time some new hypothesis makes them unpopular, but the last thing of all it should do is to stand by symbols which are outgrown, and maintain by sentiment what is patently bankrupt in rational support. The great function of imagination in life is to give wings to intellect, to enable anticipation to prepare for actuality. What God hath joined cannot be put asunder without peril. Our religion calls us to believe, but never to make-believe; and to profess as true what in intellectual

sincerity we cannot honestly imagine symbolises truth is to betray our own souls to a confusion that is bound to react on our character.

Psychology shows us the place and value of symbol and imagination as an expression of truth in a way that mere reasoning cannot attain. Yet truth is the same, whether reason or imagination touch it. Imagination is the light that breaks before the sunrise, the herald of the clearer light that is to be. In it we see through a glass darkly, but it is a promise that we come face to face with truth. In it we know in part, but it tells of the time when we shall know even as also we are known.

CHAPTER V

BELIEF, OVER-BELIEF, UNBELIEF: SUGGESTION AS A FACTOR IN BELIEF

UNDER the microscope, the ordinary thing shows that it has unexpected secrets, and to put a common word of daily speech under the etymologist's microscope will often show us something in its structure we never suspected. If we do that with the word "belief," we shall find, behind its Saxon structure, an old Teutonic root, akin to that in our word love. Trust and love are never far removed in actuality, and it is not surprising that to believe and to hold dear or valuable meant ultimately much the same. In other words, the derivation shows what is also true in fact, that belief is not purely an intellectual matter, but has roots in feeling as well.

That, then, is the first point to remember in the psychology of belief. Does it imply that belief is less certain than knowledge? Certainly, we usually speak as if it were. We may say "I believe La Guaira is the capital of Venezuela," because most of us have not been there, and have forgotten what little geography we knew. We don't say "I believe Paris is the capital of France." This use of the term belief to indicate

a slight uncertainty is the reason why many imagine that we have certain and assured knowledge of the natural world, but that our views of the spiritual world depend on somewhat precarious belief.

That is far from being the case. The very fact that there is an emotional element in belief gives to it a power which some of the most certain intellectual convictions do not carry. It may seem, for example, rank heresy to hint by means of the ether any doubts as to the existence of any such thing as ether, and for a layman to do so is certainly rash. Yet some of us have had to unlearn what we were taught at school and college about matter, gravity, even the conservation of energy, and after such shocks, he would be a bold man who believed in the unchanging certainty of ether. Again, we know light travels at some 186,000 miles per second, yet if it were announced that certain new facts had caused some modification of these figures, we should not be prepared to insist that it could not possibly be true. Even our firmest intellectual beliefs may conceivably be changed.

But now suppose that we were told that some new discovery had proved it to be right to be selfish. It certainly is much easier to prove the reasons for holding that light travels at a certain speed, than those which tell us it is wrong to be selfish. Yet we could more readily change the first belief than the second. We might be prepared to revise our beliefs about the speed

of light, for after all most of us believe that simply because we have been told. We believe it right to be unselfish because that belief is warm from the contact of our own inner experience, and that warmth, that feeling, makes it far stronger than even the securest intellectual beliefs.

Moreover, it is just as true to say that if belief gains its strength because of its emotional tinge, the same applies to unbelief. Most scepticism is far from being purely a rational conviction. Like belief, it results from an element of feeling as well. During the war, I met a soldier who was anxious to tell me that he believed nothing, and certainly he was about the most persistent unbeliever in religious matters I have met. We came to be quite good friends however, and one day he told me that his father had worked for a clergyman. It was a case of long hours and short wages; a big family, little bread, and less jam. Finally the man plucked up courage to ask for a rise. The reply was, " Go home and read St. Luke iii, 14." He went, and taking down the big family Bible laboriously spelled out the text " Be content with your wages." The touch of bitterness that crept in on the soldier's tones as he told me, made one feel sure that there was more than intellectual unbelief behind his doubts, and after all, can one wonder at them under such circumstances? Feeling then, so far from weakening belief or unbelief strengthens both.

The second characteristic of belief that psychology points out to us is its relation to will. Feeling and will work hand in glove, and anything that we feel strongly about soon creates beliefs that are in keeping with our feelings. It is easy to believe those we dislike are villains, even if the prosaic facts show they are the best of citizens, who pay their taxes on that very day they are due. This characteristic of belief has appealed to psychologists in different ways. Some tell us that beliefs are often projections of desires, and that accordingly religious beliefs are much more likely to show us the nature of man than the nature of God. Supposing it to be true that beliefs about God are an expression of our desires, does it follow that they refer to no reality? If so, they are totally unlike natural desires. Is it possible to think that hunger could exist without food? Could the birds be imagined to seek nesting materials if there were no nests to build, or mates if they were all of one sex? Every need the animal has, every desire within, is provided for. It may not find what it wants, but it is somewhere to be found. Why then think that our spiritual desires correspond to nothing real, when every natural desire has its counterpart in the world of fact? Why in spiritual things alone should man hunger after husks and pine for phantoms? We believe that our thought can give us touch with reality, but thought is, from the point of view of evolution, a later growth than will and feeling; and there is no

reason whatever to guarantee that thought gives us what is ultimately real, that cannot also suggest equally that our desires may point us in the direction of reality.

Another way of realising the connection of the will with belief was found years ago in William James's brilliant essay "The Will to Believe," to which reference has already been made. Written at a time when agnosticism and materialism were far stronger than they are now, it threw out a striking challenge. Two things are our duty, to seek truth and to avoid error. Yet sometimes practical necessities force us to act without definite proof either way. Which is better, to risk error for the sake of gaining truth, or to risk losing truth for the sake of avoiding error? To put the matter to a practical issue, is there, or is there not, a God who cares for men? Is the universe the expression of the working of some impersonal force, or is it the expression of the will of a Heavenly Father? Any skilful barrister could make up a case and a strong case either way. He could quote love, joy, goodness, our sense of beauty, the gift of humour, the glories of the spring-time, the grace of little children, the thousand things that gladden life. Then the barrister for the opposition would tell of pain and evil, of the deadly parasite and malignant germ, of war, famine and cruelty. Little wonder that a cynic once said that to praise the Lord for His goodness was like praising the postman for bringing us good

news, when to the next house he carried news of death.

Some say they cannot decide. Yet in such a matter a decision will make an enormous difference to the whole tone and temper of life. We owe nothing to a neutral power, except perhaps defiance of its soullessness. We owe all to a God who loves us. The testimony of religion is that God is love. Why not accept that testimony and at least provisionally, and try whether acting on the belief helps to prove it? The answer may be "Because I don't know whether it is true." Suppose it is not, what then? "Well, I shall have believed a lie." Certainly that is a bad thing. But suppose it is true, and you don't believe it, what then? You will have missed the truth. Is that not a worse thing? Is it not better to risk an error than to miss the chance of getting truth?

In such a case as this, when the importance of belief upon our life calls us to decide one way or other, James's contention was that the will to believe justified our adopting provisionally the alternative that seemed to us to promise truth, and therefore in putting what he called "The religious hypothesis" to the test. A belief accepted in such a way for trial, has been called an overbelief. Many accepted beliefs began their career as overbeliefs. When in the 'forties and 'fifties hypnotism began to be known, the attitude of the medical world was hostile, and pioneers like Elliotson and Esdaile suffered

for using it. Then it was slowly and cautiously accepted by some of the more progressive, as an overbelief. Now it has a recognised place in the art of healing. For many of us, telepathy is an overbelief. We cannot find conclusive evidence to warrant us regarding it as an established fact, and yet the evidence is too weighty to allow us to dismiss the matter as coincidence or delusion. Under the circumstances, it seems best to call it an overbelief, accepted provisionally until fuller knowledge confirms or denies it. The value of overbeliefs is that they leave the door open. If psychologists took the attitude that because telepathy is not scientifically established, it was unworthy of attention, it never would be established, even if it were ever possible for it to be. Faith in a fact often helps to create that fact. Faith in our ability to succeed brings success, faith in another's trustworthiness may often make that one trustworthy. No man ever made others better who did not believe in them. In exactly the same way, the will to believe in the highest and best, even if it be overbelief, not established belief, leaves the open door for the best that is to be.

It is futile to say "I will not believe without proof." The answer is "You must." Would any adventure be undertaken without belief in the possibility of success? Yet what guarantee is there of success? The venturer is one who believes first to see if he can prove. Anyone can believe what has been proved. Religion is

essentially a venture. To wait for proof is to wait for eternity. Nothing is proved until we try. But when we believe enough to try, then in actual experience we find proof or disproof. All the great ultimate problems of life must be lived out. If they are solved at all they are solved by experience, never by thinking them out beforehand.

There are some who say that it is impossible to believe at will. The man in the Gospels found the solution to that difficulty. "Lord I believe, help thou mine unbelief." I met a man once who told me that he sincerely wished to believe in the League of Nations, but could not. He knew it was but a vain hope, and that war would come again, despite all efforts. I told him that if everyone in Europe were like him, war certainly would come, but if everyone determined to believe in the League, the League would be successful. He replied that he could not determine to believe. I asked if he was absolutely certain that the League must fail. He replied "It is a hundred to one." "Exactly." I said, "Then you must act as if you expected that one chance to turn up, and the hundred to fail, and if you and the rest do that, it certainly will happen that the hundredth chance will be the one that comes to pass." That is what is meant by the will to believe. Adopt the better alternative and act upon it, and do not act upon your unbelief in it. If there is any chance whatever of the better possibility becoming the

actuality, that is the way to realise it, the will to believe may help to create the fact in which we believe.

A further point deserves notice. There is a vague impression in many quarters that it is meritorious to believe and rather wrong to doubt. That is by no means an unqualified truth. Doubt has a definite value. Most discoveries of fresh truth arise out of someone doubting the accepted explanations. Readers of the Gospels will notice how much consideration was shown by Jesus to those who found it difficult to believe, who wished to think out things for themselves; witness the difficulties of John the Baptist, of the Samaritan Woman, of Nicodemus, and the patient way in which He talked the matter out with them. Unbelief however may be wrong. If we advance doubts whether a certain course is our duty, to cover disinclination to do our duty: if we substitute the ease of doubting for the difficult and often painful mental struggle of thinking things out; if we continue to doubt rather than continue seeking truth, we are wrong. There may be more faith in honest doubt than in half the creeds as Tennyson put it, but it can hardly be called honest unbelief that refuses to face the adventure of seeking truth, and leaves the great issues of life unsettled for want of trying to face them. That is a form of moral cowardice.

We have seen the relation of belief to feeling and will. Another factor which enters into and

modifies all our beliefs is our surroundings. It may even be that physical surroundings are not without their effect, and that under the greyer colder skies of the North a severity of temper and belief develops more readily than in sunnier warmer climes. The Norseman and the Hindu both come of Aryan descent, but the mythologies of the Viking are of a sterner and stiffer type than the luxuriant mythologies of India.

Without question, however, our social surroundings count. The child accepts the beliefs of its home and school and however many are unlearnt, none is wholly free from them. There was a story told lately in the newspapers of a girl with a university education, who, back in the remote village from whence she hailed, seriously employed magic to cure a sick cow. The story may not be true, but few would say that even such a thing is impossible. Even the most critical of us found ourselves believing on very slender grounds during the war any hopeful rumour that seemed to be accepted by our fellows. The atmosphere of our surroundings enormously influences our beliefs.

This brings us to the influence of suggestion on belief, for suggestion is the process by which our minds are unwittingly influenced by our surroundings. It is not, as the average Briton seems to think, the process of telling yourself that every day in every way you are getting better and better, when you feel worse and

worse. If we go to church, to a theatre, a law-court, a mass-meeting, or even meet a group of friends, we catch by suggestion a certain atmosphere, that tends to move our minds in some direction or other. If we can, in imagination, put back the centuries, and think of ourselves living in medieval England, how few of our present beliefs could have been ours then? What is called in German the Zeitgeist, or time-spirit, is an enormous factor in our beliefs. How much we are influenced by it, none of us knows. That influence may work in both ways, according as we seek the best or the worst atmosphere around us. Dr. F. C. S. Schiller reminds us that " religions are created by exceptional men for whom spiritual things are intensely real; but they soon get watered down, discounted and adapted to the needs and outlook of the ordinary man for whom the spiritual world is normally a half-belief." The criticism that many would pass upon modern Christianity is that it is far too often presented in this discounted form, and not in the clear, strong, simple spiritual and social teaching of its founder. Yet it is possible to accept by suggestion from our surroundings this watered-down form as the expression of genuine Christianity.

Similarly with even patent errors. Cicero remarked sarcastically that he wondered that two augurs could pass each other in the street without smiling. Yet it is possible that the augur who lived in the atmosphere of augury

could honestly believe what educated Romans regarded as a matter for open ridicule. We cannot help our own beliefs being influenced by our surroundings, not only religious beliefs, but beliefs about life, duty, conduct, and just as much also our scientific beliefs. But we can see to it that the cleansing winds of criticism, and the clear light of sense and reason keep our minds fresh and our beliefs sane and sound. If it is a duty to believe, it is a duty to believe honestly. Lord Balfour once drew attention to the distinction between the causes and reasons of belief. To be honest in belief one must try to know both. Possession is nine-tenths of the law. Certain beliefs owing to various causes, rational, emotional, social, traditional, get possession of our minds, and reason becomes an advocate to plead the cause of the belief in possession rather than a judge to test its claim to that possession. Suggestion from our surroundings is always a strong influence tending to make us drift into the conventional type of thought that marks our particular age, society, class or church.

The price of intellectual freedom is constant vigilance. It may be unwise, as Descartes once hinted, to pull down one's dwelling-house before the new one is ready, and the impatience that jettisons all beliefs, simply exposes our naked souls to all the chilling currents of doubt. Yet it is equally unwise to let the beliefs which shelter our souls crumble and decay through

lack of repair. Like every other living thing, religion involves a continual process of waste and repair. Truth is the very bloodstream of belief, and when our beliefs no longer are animated by the fresh warm sense of truth, spiritual anæmia sets in, as pernicious a disease as ever attacked the soul. But right belief honestly fought and thought out is the gateway to truth, and in it the promise is fulfilled "Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free."

CHAPTER VI

REASONING, FEELING AND ACTING: INTELLECT AND HEART IN RELIGION

HAVE you ever asked yourself "Why do I believe in God? Is it because I am convinced by reasoning that there is a God, or because I feel that there must be one?" Once I asked this question of a number of people. Most of them replied that they believed in God because they were taught to believe in childhood, and saw no reason for changing that belief. That is quite natural. We have thousands of other beliefs standing on the same basis. Some, however, said definitely that they had certain grounds for their belief. Of these the majority referred to personal experiences. They spoke of the help that had come to them by their belief in God. Some added that without God this universe was a soulless piece of machinery,

> "That grinds our good and grinds our ill
> And has no purpose heart or will."

They spoke of prayer and the response that came through it, of what God meant in the face of loss, sorrow and death. In short, the sense

of fellowship was the main basis of their belie in God.

A smaller number based belief in God upon the moral law. They were convinced that there was a principle of righteousness striving at the heart of things. The smallest class of all, said that they believed in God, because otherwise they could not explain life, the world and man.

I mention this to introduce my subject, as it shows that feeling and will count for more in religion than reasoning and explanation. Very few gave as their ground for belief in God any rational neccssity to believe in Him. The strength of religious belief does not lie in reasonings of the head at any rate; rather in those reasons of the heart which Pascal said were deeper.

As Browning put it:

> "But God has a few of us whom He whispers in the ear,
> The rest may reason and welcome: 'tis we musicians know."

It is something deeper than a necessity for explaining things that causes mankind to postulate God.

All kinds of psychologists are agreed that religion is primarily a matter of the heart, and only secondarily of the intellect. Let us be quite sure, however, what that means. It is true to say it means that there is in religion something which is not grasped by reasoning,

but that is not the same as saying something unreasonable. No one has a right to ask us to believe in what is unreasonable, but it is equally true to say that no one has a right to ask us to prove by reasoning alone, all we believe. There are intuitions which are more convincing than intellectual convictions. For example, one meets people one trusts instantly, and others one distrusts. In such cases few of us could give reasons. There are none, and we do not know the people, but none the less those judgments are seldom wrong. There is a well known story of Lord Mansfield saying to Sir A. Campbell, "Trust to your own good sense in forming your opinions, but beware of attempting to state the grounds of your judgments. The judgment will probably be right, the argument will infallibly be wrong."

In much the same way there are matters which lie at the root of religion which are rightly apprehended, but the reasons we give to explain them are generally wrong. That is what I mean by saying that whilst there is no excuse for holding to what is unreasonable, there is no justification for demanding reasons for all our convictions.

The difference between faith and superstition lies exactly in this. Faith works with reason, superstition does not. It is amazing how much superstition exists, even despite sixty years of compulsory education. When a thing is shown to be unreasonable, faith in it disappears, but

not superstition. A well-known scientist once told me that he engaged an old boatman to row him out to the bar of the harbour of a little place on the south-west coast, a bar famous for the moaning sound it makes at certain times. The boatman tried to dissuade him with stories of various mishaps that had befallen those who investigated this uncanny spot. The scientist persisted, and on reaching the bar, pointed out to the boatman how clear was the explanation of the sound he heard. The rocks were honeycombed, and as the water fell and rose with the tides, the wind, especially when it came from a certain quarter, rushed in or was driven out, and produced the moaning note exactly as it would in an organ-pipe. All this was carefully explained to the mute and disapproving boatman. "Now then," said the scientist, "it's clear enough, isn't it?" "You may say what you like, Sir," he replied stubbornly, "but she do moan!" That's superstition,—refusal to accept reason when it is clear and convincing. True religion has always been the foe of superstition, and when religion is intellectually and morally high it is the mortal enemy of magic, which, in primitive communities, mingles freely with religion. Faith accepts reason, but its light penetrates the darkness a little further ahead, where the light of reason has not yet reached. Religion is a matter of heart and of intellect, and the highest forms of religion are those which balance best the two factors.

Yet one notices often how many will reason about religion who will not practise its outward observances. The average Englishman is rather a difficult person to get to church, but he is remarkably fond of arguing about Theology. We don't argue about things which have no interest for us, and one of the ways of expressing that interest in religion most men have somewhere, is a theological argument. There is an enormous amount of unorganised Christianity in this country. I sometimes think the country was never more Christian than it is now. One has only to break through the crust of custom, and typical British reserve, and underneath it, amongst all classes, is a deep religious interest. The psychologist knows that what is in the mind comes out directly or indirectly in speech. One of the ways of trying to find what complex is troubling the patient's unconscious mind is what is called " free association." That means the patient is encouraged to talk at random, to say exactly whatever comes into his head, relevant, irrelevant, complimentary, uncomplimentary, fantastic, absurd, just anything. The skilled analyst listens to all the flood of jargon and sooner or later picks up a few clues, one of which will probably be the key he wants. " Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh," and what is on our minds comes out sooner or later.

That is why even reasoning about religion is evidence of the religious interest of the thousands

who love religious argument. No one can justify heat or quarrels, in religious matters most of all, but in extenuation let us have charity to admit that when feelings run deep, hot words spring from them, like the water from the hot springs that comes boiling to the surface. There is generally, one imagines, some depth of feeling as well as an intellectual interest behind those arguments on religious topics in which the non-church-goer indulges. We English are reserved, partly by disposition, partly by custom, and the average Englishman is never so awkward as when he is feeling something deeply. There is an immense amount of latent religious feeling in hearts that never mention it, and outwardly never seem to act on it.

But now, supposing that reason and feeling clash—which must give way? Let us consider their claims. Feeling and will are older and go deeper than reason in our minds. Is there then any ground for regarding reason as a hereditary monarch to control them? The answer many give is that whilst we cannot make others feel as we feel, and will as we will, if we reason correctly we can make them agree. You *must* listen to reason. Hence only that which is guaranteed by reason must control our minds, and reason must be the final authority in religious matters, as in others. That is excellent in theory, but in practice things don't work out so well. If we go to any Parliament and listen to the debates, one side produces

unanswerable arguments, and so does the other! After 'a feast of reason and a flow of soul' the vote is taken, and the experts know almost exactly how it will go. None of the reasoners expects to convert the other side, however sure he is that his case is the one approved by reason. The two sides have different feelings and wills about the matter, and that is why the reasoning doesn't convince them. They can counter every argument with another equally forcible.

Again, Professor A. puts forth his theory with all the reasons his well-trained mind can set out, reasons which convince him, yet Professor B. is equally sure the opposite view is true, and Professor C. is equally against both. All the men are trained reasoners, but they cannot settle these matters by reasoning, nevertheless.

Reason is undeniable in matters that are purely abstract. The reasoning in a proposition in geometry is undeniable by all who understand it, but comparatively few things are capable of being settled in this way. The most important problems of life can be argued, but there is more in them than mere logic can settle. We remember Goldsmith's village schoolmaster:

> "In arguing too, the parson own'd his skill,
> For e'en though vanquish'd he could argue still."

So can most of us, and on political, social, economic and religious questions when we have

different wills and feelings. We may reason till we are tired, and hear

> "Much argument around it and about
> Yet evermore go out by that same door
> Wherein we went."

It is plain then that we do not listen to reason invariably. It may even be right that we should not. During the war, we heard a great deal of the philosophy of Nietzsche, that strange, lone fierce man who condemned all gentleness as unmanliness, who ridiculed Christian teaching as a "Slave morality," taught that the strong should inherit the earth, and a race of "blonde beasts," the supermen, should develop to seize power by sheer strength, and crush all weaklings.

If we had met Nietzsche in argument, we might well be imagined to have got the worst of it. His intellectual abilities might have pulverised all our reasons. Yet we should have been as unconvinced at the end as the beginning. No amount of reasoning would allow us to accept such views. That which is deeper than reason would have cried out its protest. Out-reasoned we might have been, but still we should remain stubbornly unconvinced.

It may seem that in all this I am advocating a blind credulity, that prefers the darkness to the light which that candle of the Lord within man, our reason, gives. That is far from my intention. In questions that can be decided

by our intellectual powers, reason must rule. There are scores of questions concerning our religious beliefs, the age, date, authorship of religious documents, the philosophical and scientific validity of statements in the creeds, which are matters upon which reason should, and ultimately must, decide. But the inner spirit of religion, and the fundamental truths it teaches cannot be judged solely by reason any more than we can judge art or music purely by rational considerations. Kant, the great German philosopher, said that pure reason could not give us God, freedom or immortality. Those were truths which practical reason, by which he meant moral conviction, alone could establish.

Suppose we asked any of our leading thinkers to prove to us that there is a God, insisting that he must use nothing but purely rational arguments. He might say that there is good reason for thinking that some ground or cause underlies the universe and that this is God, or, since things do not make themselves, it is reasonable to assume a maker. But whether that maker of things is Our Father in Heaven is not a matter on which reasoning can enlighten us.

Or again, has man a freewill, or is he just a puppet dancing as the strings of circumstance pull? The freewill question has been argued for centuries, and still is argued. It is evidently not a matter that reasoning can settle. Yet a fact is a fact, whether or not we can explain it

exactly. For example, no one can precisely explain all the movements a bird makes in flight, but we see them fly. Some think that in the same way we must accept the irresistible sense and appearance of freedom as showing we are free, even if our way of trying to explain how we can be free, fails to explain. After all, apparently, even electrons behave as they ought not to behave if the classical conceptions of mechanics and physics, which certainly seemed entirely reasonable are to hold, and so we are told that to-day we must revise the classical conceptions: no one suggests we should refuse to believe in this irregular way the electron has of behaving. Facts must come before theories, about freewill and electrons alike, and we must accept fact even if we cannot explain it. Or to take the last of the three things Kant mentioned—immortality. It is certainly a reasonable doctrine and yet I believe that not one per cent. of those who hold it, hold it purely and simply on grounds of reason.

Let us sum up and see where we stand then. We condemn ourselves to intellectual confusion if we fly in the face of reason, yet reason cannot give us certainty as regards the deepest needs of religious life and belief. We have our feelings and intuitions about these things, but the question remains what if reasoning and our feelings are tugging in different ways? Well then, try it out in action. The test Jesus gave which should prove or disprove His teaching was this " If

any man willeth to do the will, he shall know of the teaching whether it be of God, or whether I speak from myself." Coleridge was asked once if Christianity were true. His reply was "Try it." That is the only way of decision. I am often approached by young university men and girls who are keenly interested in religious matters, with requests to solve their doubts. They often seem convinced that if I could do so, all would be well. I am not so sure, because of what psychology teaches, namely that doubts are often symptoms of indecision about action, rather than intellectual difficulties. Here is the kind of thing I mean in simple form. A man seated snugly before the fire is worried by his wife to go out to the next town and call on a sick relative. He says, "I'd go, but I don't know whether the 5.42 runs on Saturdays." She suggests Bradshaw, and he replies that it is last month's copy, and stifles an inconvenient conviction that the train service is not likely to change in mid-winter. He says so convincingly that he would go if he were sure of the train, that he almost persuades himself, on second thoughts yes he does persuade himself, that this doubt is the real reason. He may not be quite so successful with his wife! In a little trivial comedy of that sort, you have a miniature of what much doubt represents, indecision to take action, not necessarily that we do not want to act but that we can't balance the pros and cons, and so we stifle the

uncomfortable feeling that we ought to act with the assurance that we would if we were quite sure.

I do not say all doubt is of that type, but I am certain that most doubt is solved by action. It is one of the maxims of psychology that thought was given to guide activity, and doubt which means we do not know what to think, often means we do not know how to act. The advice that psychological teaching gives is to plunge in and try. It is an excellent precept that was given to us in childhood to think before we act, but after all Nature's way is act first. There are very few acts of heroism, few of the ventures that stir our pulses, which would have been undertaken had thought come before action. The heroic is often the unreasonable. The man who cannot swim who leaps in after a drowning child is not reasonable, but he is a hero, and our sentiments applaud him whilst our reasons call his act folly. Religion is a venture, and like every other venture, it demands a risk. Those who take the risk have to take the chance of failure, but there are millions who succeed.

It was a great adventure for those men who left their fishing boats and gear on the lake of Galilee, and responded to the call of the homeless penniless Teacher who said "Follow Me." They had no reasons to justify so rash a step. They probably received some prudent and pointed advice from their friends, but they

went, and the world is the richer for their faith. Not otherwise now, when the call comes to follow the highest and best we know is response made, not by nicely calculated reasons, but by the warm impulse of the heart.

> "In simple trust like theirs who heard
> Beside the Syrian Sea
> The gracious calling of the Lord
> Let us, like them, without a word,
> Rise up and follow Thee."

CHAPTER VII

"LIKE LOST SHEEP": THE SOUL ASTRAY

"WE have erred and strayed from Thy ways like lost sheep—have mercy upon us miserable offenders."

Do we mean those familiar words when we repeat them, or do they belong to the ideas of another generation that linger with us simply because we have not the courage or perhaps the power to change them? At any rate, an increasing number of modern folk are very shy of this language of humble penitence. It seems unreal. They are not self-righteous people, necessarily, by any means, who feel like this. They acknowledge frankly that they know they are not all they should be, but the old "Miserere" leaves them untouched, or, perhaps even, touched with indignation. "Talk about sins," said one very modern youth to me, "and I've got you. Say I've a rotten temper, and I'll confess it. Call me a selfish beggar, and I know that sometimes that's right. But talk about sin, and I don't know what you mean. It's just so much fusty theological jargon."

Walt Whitman went even further. He praises the animals compared with man:

"I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained,
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition.
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins.
Not one is dissatisfied, not one is demented with the mania of owning things.
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago.
Not one is respectable or unhappy over the whole earth."

Yes—perhaps; though with odd perversity it recalls to me a particularly aggressive little Jersey bull I once knew, whom the poet would hardly have found placid and self-contained—far from it, as he could have easily discovered by standing to meditate in his yard. Only he would not have stood long! But the lines are familiar, and they serve again to recall the division of opinion between those who speak of sin in terms of reproach and penitence and those who refuse to take it at all seriously. Which then is the right attitude regarding this question of sin, that of Walt Whitman or that of the penitent?

Our subject is "The Soul Astray"—we are to look at it in the light of psychology. What theology has to say about sin does not enter into our present purpose. Nor even are we to approach the matter as the moral teacher sees

it. It may save misunderstanding to explain that the business of psychology is to describe, not to judge. It is neutral, strictly neutral, towards its facts. It may investigate genius, for example, but it is not its business to praise genius. It may analyse the motives of a criminal, but it is not its business to condemn crime. Psychology deals with behaviour positively and descriptively. It seeks to explain it, but not to criticise it; to say what is, not what ought to be. What then we are to attempt, is not to say how wrong wrong is. Our preachers and moral teachers will tell us that. Psychology will, however, help them to understand its character better. It will try to analyse our sense of right and wrong, to see what it implies, possibly even to guess whither it leads. We must not ask psychology to go outside its province as a science, but it may help us none the less within it.

Psychology tries, where possible, to trace the evolution of mental processes. How far back can we trace the soul astray? We have strayed like lost sheep we say, and we do not blame the sheep which strays. Should we blame the man then? Yet we might recollect that there is even in the animal world a law which may be kept or broken. In Kipling's words:

"Now this is the law of the jungle, as old and as true as the sky,
And the wolf that shall keep it may prosper but the wolf that shall break it must die,

As the creeper that girdles the tree-trunk, the law
runneth forward and back,
For the strength of the pack is the wolf, and the strength
of the wolf is the pack."

The pack knows that, and pack law is strict. Woe betide the wolf who breaks it! I have read that some travellers in their canoe, pushing up river in the forest, saw a wolf kill a deer by the stream, and immediately leaving the kill, run into the woods. The travellers, in need of fresh meat, drew to the bank and took the carcase aboard, pulling back across the stream when they had done so. Presently the wolf returned with the rest of the pack, and hunted wildly round for his kill, until he traced it down to the water's edge, where, of course, the scent was lost. The unhappy wolf sat on his haunches and gave a despairing yell, and the whole pack set on him and tore him to bits. What pack law he had violated I cannot say. It may have been sheer exasperation at being fooled, that made the pack so swift in executing judgment. It seems, however, pretty clear that his fellows blame a member of the pack if he goes astray, or leads them astray.

I have seen in an English rookery a pair of young birds build a nest on a certain tree, which previously had never been selected. The nest was not more than half built, before unusual cawing and flapping showed that something exciting was proceeding in the rooks' parliament. Presently the whole flock flew to the tree and

tore the offending nest to pieces. It was not reconstructed. What building bye-laws of the rookery has been infringed I cannot say, but once again here is evidence that the animal world, particularly the pack, herd or flock, has laws and resents any actions that break them.

This tendency to go wrong is, from the point of view of psychology, a misuse of instincts. We all inherit a number of primitive instincts, which are the power-house of all our activities. In the main instincts work towards the well-being of the individual and the group, though they can, on occasion, go astray. Probably these occasions on which the pack or flock punishes an individual are due to some sense that the individual has upset pack custom, a blind resentment at the wrong working of his instincts. When we come to deal with man, we find in his nature all the instinctive tendencies at work, and the possibilities of their working wrongly are far more than in any animal, if only because man has so much wider a range of activities. His powers are mental and moral as well as physical, and in these of course lie very many more possibilities of going astray.

Someone may ask whether psychology treats human wrong doing, as if it were just those breaches of custom which bring down the vengeance of the pack. "Surely man sins and animals do not," they will say. Perhaps so, but we must not approach the matter with minds made up like that. Let us ask whether we must

make a distinction between the animal and the man astray, and if so, why? We will leave the animal world then and pass to primitive human communities. Here, of course, custom is much more complex than in the pack, and woe to the man who breaks a "tabu." It has been said that the sole crime of primitive peoples is that of breaking a "tabu" and that, on the other hand, the sense of personal uprightness comes through a man's keeping "tabu" when others have broken it, and feeling "I, at least, am not the culprit." It is impossible to say that any one sin is universally condemned by all the world. Even murder is a fine art amongst some races. The Greek historians tell us with indignation that amongst the ancient Persians, members of one family might intermarry, a thing as repulsive to the Greeks as to all civilised and most savage races. Of course these Persians were not savages and had a high moral code. Their marriage customs seem to have arisen from a mistaken notion of keeping the bluest blood pure blue. Yet that they should do so shows how difficult it is to say that any single thing is held to be wrong universally by all races, for:

"The wildest dreams of Kew are the facts of Khatmandu
And the crimes of Clapham chaste in Martaban."

Just because of this a number of writers infer that human wrongdoing is not really different from that of animals. An animal breaks pack

custom and suffers, a savage breaks tribal custom and suffers, and what we call wrong in Christian civilisation is the same, neither more nor less, just the breach of customs which have happened to grow up. Like many simple solutions, however, this is too simple. We have most of us enjoyed the cartoons of a well-known artist who has, with a fanciful wit, depicted the consternation that occurred when the Guardsman dropped his rifle on parade, or the bidder offered half a guinea in Tattersall's sale ring. There are many such customs, bits of etiquette and convention which bind us all, and we are awkward and annoyed when we transgress. Still, do we feel merely the same when we do something morally wrong? Yet if the soul astray has simply been guilty of breaking a custom, why this distinction between customs? Why are certain customs if customs only they be, so much more important than others? The simple answer that right and wrong are only approved and disapproved customs, utterly fails to tell us why some are so much more serious than others. It entirely fails to explain the bitter pangs of remorse that have driven many a man to give himself up to the justice he has avoided.

We must try again then, and if we do, we may see that although it may be true that no single thing is held by all the world to be wrong, still the distinction between right and wrong is known to every human being, shared by the Australian aborigine and the most highly cul-

tured races alike. What is more, both know "I ought to follow the right," however they differ in conceiving right and wrong. They agree that the two are never the same, and that they ought to follow the right. That is the interesting and important fact. Every race of men acknowledges that the soul can go astray, and ought not to do so. That is the unanimous verdict of all peoples. Humanity is so seldom unanimous that we must take special notice when they are at one? Does not everyone of us agree with this verdict? Would anyone care to stand up and say "I am wholly contented with myself. I could not be better. I cannot find any room for improvement"? Every man feels his own incompleteness and imperfection. Some openly confess their sins; others dislike public penitence and say little, but they too know in their hearts, as we all do, that much *is* wrong.

This, then, is the difference between an animal astray, and man. We may err like lost sheep, but we are not like sheep all the same. We know we ought, and we know we need not. Morality consists not in following approved customs, but in the inner sense "I *ought* to follow this."

It is not possible, I think, to explain that sense "I ought" as meaning "I shall suffer if I don't." The sense of, and distinction between, various sorts of conduct, the tendency to approve and condemn our own actions and those of

others, are so deeply set in our nature and so universal, that they bear all the characteristics of something inborn in us, belonging to our very nature. It is a short and easy way to call anything an instinct, but it doesn't help us much. To say that anything is done by instinct is no more illuminating than when the conjurer explains his trick by saying that the magical formula "Hi presto, pass" works the wonder. Yet one cannot avoid the sense that the basis of our moral judgments is a tendency which is of the instinctive type, not acquired simply by training, and that raises the further question whether this tendency in us to approve and disapprove is haphazard and random, or whether it points in any direction.

May we take the hint from pack law, which certainly seems to be in the main an expression of what is to help the pack to survive and evolve? In the same way, is our human sense of right and wrong something that is intended to work towards the evolution of humanity? We know little of the story of evolution, less than we thought we did. Yet it seems certain that certain species at least have evolved from simpler types to more complex; the horse, for example. Whilst this evolution was in progress, successive generations came and went, and their life-story cannot have been simply the story of their life. It must have included some developments which were pointing ahead, which would come to fruition in future generations. Are we, in the

same way, shaping towards what humanity will be? Our scientists do not think the universe is immortal. It is a clock running down, but if you wind a fourteen day clock fully you do not think it is seriously near stopping a second later, and the clock of the universe has only run for a second or so. Man's home will last a very, very long time yet, and he will be able to dwell on very, very much longer than he has dwelt on earth. Is then this great deep-set sense of a right way and a wrong way, part of man's sense of direction on the long, long trail a-winding to the land of his final destiny? May we not think that the One who made men, and set them on the long upward path, has given them in conscience a voice that says "This is the way, walk ye in it" and that if we follow that guidance as best we may we follow the finger of God?

Perhaps we have said enough on the speculative side, and some will be impatient for practical suggestions. Can psychology help us at all to keep from going astray, or to get right? Frankly, I think religion will do more for you in this way than psychology can, but psychology can offer a few suggestions that may help. We have said that wrongdoing is the misuse of instincts. Every instinct is a good thing and has a rightful place. There are no bad instincts, but some may work out in ways that are wrong. We can never wholly dry up an instinct any more than we can dry up a deep

spring. We must find a channel. If springs under your house make it damp, you must cut a channel or drain to run the water in another direction. This process takes place with instinct and is called sublimation. Psychology shows us that if we cannot destroy an instinct, we can at least choose its channel.

Then again the psychology of suggestion can help us. Thought is the germ of action. To think aright is the first step towards acting aright. We are told that imagination is more powerful than will. To will to do right often brings us up against that which is called the "Law of Reversed Effort," which means that the more you try in certain respects the less you succeed. For example try willing to go to sleep. Do you succeed? What is called "nerves" in a sportsman on an important occasion is simply this—he is so desperately anxious to play well that his anxiety spoils his natural game, and he does badly. The cricketer waiting to go in doesn't like the look of the bowling from one end. He fears that this particular bowler will get him out. He determines to play himself in carefully. He goes in and takes his stand stiffly and unnaturally and he is soon walking back to the pavilion. If only he could persuade himself that the bowling was easy and play a natural game, he would do as well as usual. The same thing happens when temptation is the bowler. Over-anxiety to do right is one of the reasons why we fail to do it. Think rightly, be confi-

dent, and you are far more likely to do right then if you nervously fear the power of temptation.

Some will, no doubt, meet this piece of psychological advice by saying that it would be all very good if they could adopt it but they cannot. It is sheer humbug to profess that they have such confidence. Psychology as a science cannot recommend you reliance on the power of God, yet psychology realises that those who have a sense of help from a power greater than themselves are able to do what those who have not that sense cannot do. The lives of millions prove that, and no fact is better attested than this, that whether religious beliefs are right or wrong, they do enable those who hold them to do what otherwise they could not do.

The last point I will stress is the notion that psychology teaches that repression is a futile and dangerous thing. That is not true. We have got to repress all sorts of inclinations, from the inclination some feel to jump in front of an express, though they haven't the faintest desire to die, to the inclination to abuse the policeman who stops us in a traffic block when we have two minutes in which to catch our train! It is easier to deflect than to repress, and other things equal, it is better, but it is a popular error to suggest that psychology warrants us from abstaining to repress impulses. Indeed the man who cannot, becomes the pitiable slave of every passing gust of feeling.

We have been studying the tendency to take the wrong road. That, however, is only half the story. Our next subject will be the return of the wanderer to the right road, and what we have said here must be taken in connection with that. As William James put it, "Here is the real core of the religious problem: Help! Help!" The soul astray calls help. Is there any voice, any answer, any that regards that cry? In the dark night of the soul the answer comes as cheering as the Day-star, the voice of an unseen helper who says "Be of good cheer. It is I. Be not afraid."

CHAPTER VIII

TURNING AGAIN: CONVERSION AND ITS VALUE

When a prospector makes a discovery of gold and pegs out his claim, there is a rush of would-be gold-diggers to the new Promised Land. Something like that happened when, towards the end of last century, an American writer, Starbuck, published a study of conversion from the psychological point of view. He had suggested the matter to William James, who saw no particular promise in the inquiry. Starbuck persisted, and James was one of the first to retract his opinion, and join, a few years later, with a book that is a classic, *The Varieties of Religious Experience.* Since then books on the psychology of religion in general, and on conversion in particular, have been as plentiful as the proverbial blackberries.

Most of us have a dramatic sense, which leads us to fix on the dramatic instant. Yet the dramatic instant is seldom the most important thing in any process. When the last barrier was blown up in the Panama Canal, and the waters of the Atlantic and the Pacific met, the world heard of it, but the long story and agony of Panama was a far greater thing than the moment when it finally issued in success.

Similarly with conversion, Starbuck indeed actually restricted the word conversion to sudden conversion, and spoke separately of lines of growth not involving conversion. But the dramatic sense must not lead us to that error. Conversion means a change of direction, sometimes with, sometimes without a crisis. But in neither case is it other than a gradual process. Nor is it unique; far from it. We all know what it is to change direction morally and spiritually. "That man," said one of our judges, when sentencing a hardened criminal, "was once an innocent child." Nor are sudden and dramatic changes of direction peculiar to religion. One of Prof. James's cases, for example, is that of a man who had a violent infatuation for a girl whom he describes as having "a spirit of coquetry like a cat." Although he knew she was unfit to be his wife, his infatuation nearly drove him insane. To quote his own words, "I understood well those young men murdering their sweethearts, which appear so often in the papers." It is the sequel to this rather common little story, not the story itself, that is striking. Let me quote again: "I was going to my work after breakfast one morning, thinking as usual of her and of my misery, when, just as if some outside power laid hold of me, I found myself turning round and almost running to my room, where I immediately got out all the relics of her which I possessed, including some hair, all her notes and letters,

and ambrotypes on glass. The former I made a fire of, the latter I actually crushed beneath my heel in a sort of fierce joy of revenge and punishment. I now loathed and despised her altogether, and as for myself I felt as if a load of disease had suddenly been removed from me. That was the end. I never spoke to her or wrote to her again in all the subsequent years, and I have never had a single moment of loving thought towards one who for so many months entirely filled my heart."

That is a striking human document, and the phrase " as if some outside power laid hold of me " is one which is very significant when we think of conversion. It shows clearly that there are experiences, not connected with religion, which afford parallels to religious conversion, and these prove helpful illustrations of the psychological mechanism of conversion. Here is a moral right-about-face. Some years ago I had to deal with a soldier who drank heavily, and when drunk, persistently ill-treated his sick wife. The poor woman died, and the neighbours decided to make a hostile demonstration against the husband at the funeral. I have seldom seen a man so terrified. Bullets he cared nothing for, but he simply dared not face those enraged British matrons of his street! I had to visit all the neighbours, argue and plead, and rather amusingly found the only argument that appealed was to point out that they wouldn't like such a thing at *their* funerals, however bad a

husband they might have been unlucky enough to have had! Finally, the *cortège* drove away, amid rows of women and children staring in hostile silence, whilst the unhappy soldier sweated with fear. When all was over, I had him in my study and told him he must sign the pledge. He flatly refused, saying he couldn't keep it, he couldn't face his old drinking companions as a teetotaller, and so forth. At last when I had given up, he left the room, and as I showed him out, he suddenly turned back shouting, "I'm d——d if I won't. Give me a pen." It was the only time in my life that I have been glad to hear a man swear! That pledge was taken and kept absolutely.

Such illustrations, however, must not blind us to the fact that it is in religious matters that conversion is a far more usual, one almost said, normal experience than in any other. Occasional parallels like those just quoted, there certainly are in other spheres, but in numbers, in the striking character of what happens, and in the permanence and influence of the after-effects, there is nothing to set beside religious, and especially, Christian, conversion.

Having said this much of conversion generally, let us now turn to study it a little more closely. First of all what are the usual conditions of conversion? One is that it most commonly occurs in adolescence, and it is needless to explain why. Obviously at adolescence mental and physical powers reach their first maturity,

and in Christian countries at any rate, young people receive some liberty of choice not only in religion, but in other matters, at that time. In non-Christian religions, apart from initiation ceremonies, the nearest parallel to conversion is the decision of those who become ascetics or devotees. This is largely because adolescence brings less liberty of choice than it does with us, and religion is frequently, like most else in the people's lives, a matter of unquestioned social custom. Yet striking cases of religious conversion occur in almost all faiths. When we speak of conversion as belonging to the youthful period of life, we must recollect that actual age, and mental age, are not quite the same. Doctors tell us that a man is as young as his arteries. Psychologists say he is as young as his mind. As long as the mind is sufficiently plastic to adapt itself to new conditions, a man is psychologically adolescent, and there are cases on record o religious conversion when a man has passed the allotted three-score years and ten.

Next come a couple of conditions, closely related, mass-suggestion and auto-suggestion, the influence of others and of one's self. We often hear about the mass-suggestion of revivals and of the evils of emotionalism. If people are led by a wave of mass-emotion to profess a decision for which they are mentally and spiritually unprepared, the results will evaporate as the emotions cool. Yet in all fairness we should recollect that all great decisions need emotional

energy to make them effective, and that in proper measure, emotion is essential to carry them into effect. Moreover, mass-suggestion is not limited to crowds. It occurs in a steady and regular way in all groups which study and work together, and is one of the normal influences all of us receive from our fellows, alike in religious as in social, political and other matters. This influence from the group has to encounter the personal factor in every case. A few, who are called by psychologists, contra-suggestible, tend to take the direction opposite to that of their fellows, although it is interesting to notice how often this is simply a bit of self-assertiveness which satisfies them that they are not the kind of person to be led by others. Afterwards they quietly follow, like the man in the Gospels who, told to work in the vineyard, refused but afterwards repented and went. The more important fact that follows from this, however, is that it indicates that no one method of presenting a religious appeal is likely to grip all minds alike. Psychology can teach the evangelist who imagines that his way of appeal is the way all must follow, that there are many gates into the valley of Decision. Some come down from the hills to enter, others by way of the plain. The wisest fishers of men learn to vary their methods according to the great variety God has made amongst his creatures.

Another factor is subconscious incubation, and by that is meant a period of inner preparation

before the conversion. There are no absolutely instantaneous conversions. We can distinguish gradual conversion from sudden, or as Prof. De Sanctis has called it "fulminant" conversion, but even the sudden type is not so sudden as it seems. The kind of external force urging towards the goal, which was mentioned just now, is often manifest in conversion, and is frequently one's own unconscious mind, the self we do not know, which thus appears as an outside agency. Not infrequently this incubation or preparation period is marked by a revulsion or tendency in the opposite direction. Jung has said that St. Paul was a Christian before his conversion, and that his persecution of the Church was simply his refusal to admit this to himself, a Pharisee of the Pharisees. Whether that is so or not, it is quite within the bounds of psychological probability. His own description of his state was that he heard a voice telling him it was hard to kick against the goad, that is the compulsion of his own unconscious self which he so vigorously resisted.

This is connected with a further factor—dissatisfaction. Our forefathers called this conviction of sin. The literalism of their day pictured vividly the terror of future punishment, and ignorance is the parent of fear. To-day we have kindlier views of eternal mercy, and that is perhaps why the abject terror that we sometimes read about is less in evidence. Yet some dissatisfaction is essential in conversion. We do not exchange the old for the new when we

are wholly satisfied with the old. I recollect a well-educated boy coming into my study, throwing himself on the sofa, and declaring "I'm fed up with myself and everything." He was healthy, doing well at college and in sport, without any love troubles, the son of a happy home. The one thing that was wrong was spiritual adjustment. He was out of touch with the God in whom we live and move and have our being. He scarcely knew it, though afterwards he came to recognise it was so. In the old days he would probably have lamented his sins and been called a mourner or penitent. In the present age the same spiritual condition took place as a kind of depression. There is no doubt that thousands of people suffer from similar depression without knowing the cause.

Many modern psychologists think that conversion is due to some unconscious conflict, the struggle between two opposing complexes, which is at last resolved, in some cases, like that of St. Paul, with what seems violent suddenness. Sadhu Sundar Singh tells us he used to throw stones at Christian preachers, and burn Bibles, and vehemently follow his own religion, yet with such increasing misery that he resolved to commit suicide. He prayed "O God, if there is a God, wilt thou show me the right way, or I will kill myself." He decided to throw himself in front of the early morning train. Half an hour before it was due, the room lit up before his eyes as if it were on fire,

and he fell on his face like St. Paul. The vision vanished, but peace and joy came, and the Sadhu went forth to tell his father he had become a Christian. Such wonderful experiences are no doubt due to the sudden solution of unconscious conflict, but they are not normal, and we lose sight of the normal need for, and value of, conversion, if our interest is confined to them. What one must consider are the cases of depression, vague unhappiness, nervous troubles, which are far more common. What is their cause, what can cure them?

Our standpoint in these talks is psychological, not that of the preacher, yet it remains that God is to everyone who believes in Him the greatest of all realities. That follows from the very definition of God. If anything were greater than God, that thing would be God. But the greatest reality has not always the central place, and where it has not, there must necessarily be a maladjustment of life, and one that is often shown in what we call nerves, depression, aimless irritation. Those who suffer thus often see a physician and possibly a psychoanalyst, which is a wise and proper course if the trouble is physical or mental. If its root is spiritual, however, this does not lie within the sphere of the ordinary consultant, and the patient remains as he was. Perhaps he may have some sense of what is wrong, and consult a spiritual adviser. Yet many clergy give the well-meant, but quite futile advice, that the sufferer should pray more

and go to church regularly. Many try that, and finding themselves no better, conclude that the root of the trouble is not spiritual. They fail to see that their whole life is out of proportion. It has no spiritual centre or plan. For example, a patient suffers constant pain, flies to drugs, takes a holiday, tries this and that, until his physician finds that the root trouble is a misplaced organ or organs in the body. When that is put right, health comes back. The parallel with the soul is close. If a life is spiritually out of proportion, if things have got misplaced, if life has no dominant moral purpose, then the soul is sick. Religious exercises are as useless in this case, as drugs are in the other. What is needful is conversion, which means not any particular form of emotional crisis or decision, but a recentring of life and a revaluation of all its values. It means a fresh adjustment of the soul to God. Everyone has to settle the place that God takes in their life. Some find that life passes pleasantly enough with material ends, and the simple joys of home, friends and work occupying them from its beginning to its end. They are not necessarily irreligious by any means, but their interests lie more in the world of the senses than in the realities beyond our senses. Others are not built on those lines. Their mind and soul crave for something more than even the happiest occupations and pleasures of the world of sense, and yet they do not know it. Hence their

unhappiness, their depression and nerves. Jung has said that many cases of neurosis are due to the patient having failed to fulfil his life's task and destiny, and blaming something else for the failure; whilst Adler, another great psychoanalyst, stresses the fact that the sense of inferiority makes patients fail to face the situations of life. In different ways both, therefore, tell us of the mental unhappiness that comes from a wrong adjustment to life.

Similarly there are many whose unhappiness is lack of spiritual adjustment. They are trying to satisfy what is really a spiritual nature in themselves with non-spiritual interests. Because others seem satisfied with these, they fail to see why they also cannot be. They are like men bred in the mountains living on the plains, and thinking that because the dwellers of the plains are healthy there, they also should be, and pining without knowing it for the heights and the heather. The only remedy for spiritual lack of adjustment and its consequent depression is to turn again, in other words conversion, which will give a new and spiritual meaning and direction to their lives. Everyone has some religious capacity, but some are what we have called active and others passive in religious matters, though none of us are wholly of either type. None the less those who are predominantly of the active type cannot be content with that which contents the passive. There are thousands of people who are of an

intensely religious nature without knowing it. The ordinary services of the churches, the ordinary religious books make no special appeal to them, and they conclude they are not religiously-minded. They do not realise that man's mind has a twofold outlook, upon the world of sense and the world beyond the senses, and that their minds are strongly desiring satisfaction from the world beyond the senses, which is denied to them. Hence the listlessness, depression, lack of joy in this life and its usual occupations and pleasures. They would enjoy these things again if the other side of their minds were satisfied. That is their particular form of unconscious conflict. It is not the sharp struggle of St. Paul or Sadhu Sundar Singh. It is like the pining of the mountain-born for the air of their birthplace. In the majority of cases, religious conversion is neither more or less than this—it is the assertion of our minds' demand for that spiritual outlook which is their heritage, and just because it is this, conversion of some sort, sudden, gradual, outward, inward, is a normal process.

Lastly, the after effects of conversion. The end of a conflict always involves relief. It involves joy also, according to the intensity of our feeling during the conflict and the success of its issue. The raptures of the few must not lead the many who feel less emotion, to doubt the reality of their decision. In Thomas Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree*, the heroine is described

on the wedding-day as telling herself she must feel very different now she is married, and wondering why she didn't. Truly a master touch of intimate observation! Yet the change had come, and in the years to be it would make itself more and more evident. Not otherwise is it with the change that accompanies conversion. Its reality is not attested necessarily by immediate feeling, but by future results. Some seed falls on stony ground with no depth, and soon withers. Others bring forth fruit; and yet whatever be the ultimate result, the experience of conversion is never effaced from the life that has undergone it. Years afterwards the old flames may spring up once more at the remembrance, the old warmth and joy stir like the breath of spring after winter, and if the once fierce flame burns after with a gentler glow, its light still shines upon the path, the old pilgrim way, the way of pilgrim's progress towards the Celestial City.

CHAPTER IX

THE HEART OF THE MATTER: PRAYER

THE heart of the matter—prayer. Surely it is, for to put it with bluntness, if there is nothing in prayer there is nothing in religion. For many centuries mankind worshipped the sun. They realised what enormous benefits the sun showered down on them. In some ancient Egyptian pictures, the sun's rays are represented as arms stretched down to earth with hands full of blessings. We know even better than they did, the benefits of the sun. We know that coal is the stored-up energy of the sun, and that, therefore, the sun runs our trains and steamships, and generates our electric supplies. We know that the strength in our bodies comes from the food we eat, and represents once more the energy of the sun, so that if what we used to call the "force" of gravity, till Einstein came, makes us fall down, the sun helps us up again. Mankind has been called a parasite of the grass, for he eats green herbs or the meat of creatures which is made from the herbs they eat. Yet, even more truly, man is a parasite of the sun, which makes all things grow. Our debt to the

sun is far greater than the ancients guessed. Yet they worshipped the sun, we do not. Why not worship such a universal benefactor? Our answer is that the sun does all this for us no doubt, but it does not know it, nor respond to us. It is but a thing after all, and we do not worship things.

Exactly, and that is why if prayer means nothing religion is empty. There might still be a God who was the life of the universe, and the creator of man, but a God as unheeding towards us as the sun is, it would be folly to worship. The meaning of prayer is that God does respond, and if that is untrue, then God would be simply what the sun is, something very valuable no doubt, something essential to our existence. We should be interested in such a God, as we are interested when astronomers tell us facts about the sun, but religion would cease to mean anything at all.

Our standpoint in these talks is that of psychology, not of philosophy or theology, and so discussion of the problems of prayer does not enter into it. Psychology tries to analyse the mental processes involved in prayer, and to tabulate its results in the life of those who practise it. It can also offer some practical suggestions as to methods of prayer, and it is therefore to these three points that we must confine ourselves, if we would keep within the limits of our subject.

First then the mental processes involved in prayer. Here at once we are brought up against

the word auto-suggestion, for many to-day are eager to assure us that prayer is a matter of auto-suggestion, and I do not quarrel with them until they slip in a little word that makes all the difference and say prayer is *all* a matter of auto-suggestion. Let us see first, however, how far we can agree. We may admit there is an element of auto-suggestion in prayer. What of that? I am, perhaps, trying rather late in the day, to improve my knowledge of some foreign tongue, and it is hard work when one is in the midstream of life's crossing. I read how Arnold of Rugby started Sanskrit at the age of sixty, and Robert Hall at the same age took up the study of Italian, to read Dante. "Come," I say to myself, "you are not nearly sixty. If they could, you can." That's pure suggestion, and a very stimulating and helpful suggestion too. Exactly in the same way if a man prays, and rises from prayer saying "God will help me, I will try" it is suggestion, God-suggestion indeed more than auto-suggestion, and by its means that man will do something he would not attempt to do without it. It creates real results and probably very valuable results too. Suggestion is a normal mental process, and it enters into prayer and into a thousand other things as well. When anyone tries to slip in that word "all"—"all auto-suggestion" however, he is going beyond the ground of psychology, because he means by saying prayer is all auto-suggestion, that it is purely a human affair and

that God does not enter into it. No one has a right to quote the authority of psychology for any such statement.

For, even supposing "without prejudice," as lawyers say, that it were true that psychologically prayer were all auto-suggestion, still that would raise the further question what is the relation of God to the self? Those who think they exclude God from prayer by calling it all auto-suggestion, are presuming that God is a separately existing being like other people are. It is not only St. Paul, however, but the teachers of almost all the world's great religions who say with him "In Him we live and move and have our being." If that be so, there can be no part of the self shut off from God, and what is called auto-suggestion may be His own message. Such questions lie beyond psychology's proper province, but it has been necessary to point out that to call prayer a matter of suggestion, even to go to the unwarranted length of saying it is entirely suggestion, does not in the least contribute to the question of the relationship between God and man in prayer. That matter can be argued on grounds belonging to philosophy, but it is not in any sense a psychological problem.

Let us speak next of the results of prayer. The word results suggests to many, stories of answers to, and benefits received from prayer in outward things. The psychologist, however, is more interested in noticing the influence

prayer has upon character. The facts he notices are these. In all religions, not Christianity alone, men and women seek passionately for a direct personal touch with God, and what is more they believe that through prayer and similar spiritual exercises, they attain it. A formal prayer said daily may be set down as sheer habit or childhood training, but there are millions who spend hours in prayer, hours stolen from busy lives, and who would not on any account abandon the practice. Can anyone believe that this kind of prayer would persist intensely through life by sheer habit, if it meant no more than talking to the gatepost would mean. No, certainly those who practise prayer are assured that they gain something from it, some response. Are they making a huge error? At any rate we may admit that a difference that is marked unmistakably in their lives, follows from the practice of prayer. In thousands of cases, the whole life is altered, and all its values transformed. The man who prays, by that very act links to himself another order of things, different from that of the world in which he lives. Perhaps hitherto his life has been centred on success and popularity, and religion has meant to him simply churchgoing. Something enters into his life which makes him turn to prayer, and he discovers a new side of life which was undreamt of before. He begins to care less about pleasing men and more about pleasing God. Religion means to him a real

fellowship with an invisible friend. Can he possibly remain the same man? Whatever you may say about prayer, whether you believe in prayer or not, all must admit its vast influence on life.

I was told lately that the head of a great and well-known business house in this country, when he has any pressing problems to decide, any important interview or letter to see to, says to his secretary "Leave me for a couple of moments please." The secretary knows what happens when the door is shut. From the shelf by the desk comes a little Testament, a few words are read, and then a busy merchant kneels by his desk for a moment or so, and rising, rings the bell for the business he has to perform. Someone asked him once whether he thought he received answers from heaven, telling him what to do. "No," he replied, "I do not ask for that. Only I know that when I have prayed, I shall be in the frame of mind to keep my head, and if need be my temper, and to do the right thing. That's all." Such an effect is bound to happen, if a man really believes in prayer as a link with God.

For practically all religions, prayer is looked upon as a spiritual training. We train the body for physical contests, sport of every kind: we train the mind by education, and give special training for special posts. It would be strange if the spiritual side of our nature did not need, and what is more, benefit from,

training. Prayer is that training. We must define prayer widely enough to include meditation, which for some, notably Buddhists, means more than prayer in our sense. One of the Buddhist meditations is known as the candle meditation. The aspirant divides a candle into eight sections by sticking bits of wood into it at equal intervals. Adopting the posture of meditation, he begins, and changes the subject of each meditation as soon as the melting candle releases each bit of wood, and the noise of its fall warns him it is time to think of a fresh topic. The Buddhist has no doubt that such meditation trains the mind. The Hindu saint believes that control of the breath aids spiritual absorption, and practises it with results Europeans find it hard to believe. Most Christians kneel and pray in words. Quakers sit in silence. Yet all are training the soul, and training tells. The untrained team holds the professionals for a while, but training turns the scale in the end. The uneducated lad, by sheer youthful energy, mounts the ladder, but in later life, even in successful later life, you hear him regretting his lack of education, "How much further might I have gone," he says, "if I had been trained!" The man of prayer is the trained man, and that tells in life's struggles. There is always something that marks those to whom prayer is a great reality, call it character, personality, or whatever else you will. The man who goes through life with the sense of an unseen

helper will at least have no inferiority complex, and because he believes his strength is not his own, no superiority complex either. He is different, and he is sure that it is God who has made the difference.

The point that seems to have impressed every psychologist who studies the phenomena of prayer is the value of that difference. An eye-witness at Khartum wrote of Gordon "It is wonderful that one man should have such influence over 200,000 people. Numbers of women flock here every day to ask him to touch their children to cure them. They call him the Father and Saviour of the Sudan. How one man could have dared to attempt his task I wonder. One day of his work and bother would kill another man, yet he is so cheerful at breakfast, lunch and dinner, but I know he suffers fearfully from low spirits. I hear him walking up and down his room all night (it is next to mine). It is only his great piety carries him through." Gordon's own words give his secret, "I would give my life for these poor people of the Sudan. How can I help feeling for them? All the time I was there I used to pray that God would lay on me the burden of their sins, and crush me with it instead of these poor sheep." When he entered Khartum he said "I come without soldiers, but with God on my side to redress the evils of this land. I will not fight with any weapons but justice." In Gordon's copy of the *Dream of Gerontius* these

words are underlined: " Pray for me, my friends, who have not strength to pray." It is not a pulpit maxim, but a psychological fact that apart from prayer, Gordon could not have been what he was or done what he did.

Or think of Mayday morning in 1873, when the two native boys, alarmed by the stillness of the tent, went in to find, kneeling with head buried in his hands upon the pillow, in the attitude of prayer, the body, the body only, of David Livingstone. He had not found those eagerly sought sources of the Nile, but he found other sources, fountains of strength, the living waters. Livingstone's life was a monument of prayer, a life made possible only by prayer. Or imagine Edith Cavell, waiting as the long hours of night crept round to the dawn hour and death, fortifying her soul in prayer. Could she have faced what she did, in the spirit she showed, if prayer meant nothing to her? Behind such a heroic trio as these, stand a great cloud of witnesses, of every religion and race, of every time and country, back to the beginnings of history, whose lives bear the same testimony to the effects of prayer.

It is not for psychology to say whether their belief in prayer was right or wrong, but such testimony is so impressive, and such results so great, that one can but confess that if prayer is a delusion, a delusion has done more for mankind than any rationally accredited truth. It is a sorry commentary on human nature to

believe that its greatest altruism and noblest self-sacrifice, its most lofty and heroic examples have been inspired and sustained in endurance and achievement, by a delusion so patent, that the critic, to whom prayer means nothing personally, is able to detect what they have failed to see, and expose the delusion under which they have laboured. (Nothing more than prayer has helped man to that upward look to things unseen and eternal that is the true glory of man.) Which, after all is the fitter symbol that shall represent humanity, the pen-painting by Bunyan of the man with the muck-rake, or the picture of Millet of the peasants bare-headed as the Angelus rings? Even those who do not regard Jesus as God, regard Him as the highest type of man. (To realise what prayer meant in the life of Jesus is to realise the unlimited possibilities of its results upon character, and in producing the highest character the world has known.)

Another point of contact between the study of psychology and the practice of prayer, is that psychological knowledge can contribute a few practical suggestions. Prayer, after all, is a mental process and subject to the general laws governing mental processes which psychology studies. To many, prayer is a regular habit, certain words being repeated daily. Such a habit has value. By sheer suggestion it impresses certain truths on the mind, and creates an attitude of dependence upon God. Yet it may

mean little else, because the essence of habit is to save attention. If we had to attend to every movement of our feet in walking, a stroll would be unendurable. But walking is habitual, and we walk without attending to the process. Exactly so with prayer. The habit minimises the attention, and therefore empties prayer of many of its possibilities. We need not give up the habit, but we should vary its expression. Interest depends on change. We can watch a flickering fire, or the break of the waves far longer than we can watch the wall of the room, or the cliff. The naturalist, observing the ways of the wild, knows that as long as he is still, he is disregarded. The slightest movement makes every creature alert. Obviously there is a strong reason, for a moving object means some response on their part to its movements. The same law runs upward. We find interest in a changing thing that does not exist in that which is unchanged, and it is a sound psychological maxim to suggest that those who would get the full possibilities out of the practice of prayer should vary their methods of approach to God, and not always spend their moments of devotion during the day in the same manner.

A further point is the value of passive waiting. Many of the mystics insist that spiritual experiences should not be sought, but merely accepted. Our busy practical Western temperament inclines us to regard meditation as the Eastern saints practise it, as a waste of time. One can

learn from other religions, however, and as the desire of the best of Hindus and Buddhists for spiritual things is no less than ours, we may be sure they would not practise quiet if it were not of proved value. There is a psychological reason. Attention to any matter raises the threshold of consciousness and shuts out outside things. It is as if a notice "Engaged" were placed on the doors of the mind to keep out intruders. If prayer means an inflow of strength from divine sources a communication from God to the soul, to busy ourselves asking for this and that may be the surest way to prevent our hearing the answer. There is a time for asking, but there is equally a time for quiet waiting, meditation, silence, in which we are susceptible to that which may come to us. If telepathy be a fact, and human minds can communicate through no known medium, it would be rash to deny the possibility that the mind of God may be in contact with the minds of men.

In ways like this psychology can suggest something to help in the technique of prayer. But the greatest requisite cannot be learned in this way. There is an art of prayer, but prayer is more than an art. The best training in art will not make an artist, unless there is something within, and prayer becomes an avenue between earth and heaven only to those of whom the Master of prayer said. "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God."

CHAPTER X

THE CROWD AND THE GROUP: FELLOWSHIP IN RELIGION

MANY will remember the Welsh Revival that ran like a flame of fire through the mining valleys of Wales about thirty years ago. A friend of mine, anxious to see for himself, went down to Wales, and found himself in a bare little chapel, with whitewashed walls and upright benches, which stood, square and stark, on the scarred hill side. It was packed with a crowd of both sexes and all ages, waiting for the evangelist. The hour for the service passed, and he did not come. The expectant crowd waited, with rising emotions, as they sang unaccompanied by choir or organ, Welsh hymns, some stirring, some penitential, set to minor tunes. At last, when all hope of the eagerly expected leader seemed gone, there appeared suddenly a young man with the keen tense face and restless eyes of the enthusiast, who pushed his way up the crowded aisle, regarding no one, and regarded by everyone. The singing ceased, and a hush of expectant silence fell on the congregation. The evangelist mounted the pulpit and knelt for many moments, head buried in his hands in silent prayer. The

silence of the congregation grew oppressive. A woman whimpered, and whispered sobs replied. Suddenly the evangelist sprang to his feet, and cried, "Is there a man here aged thirty-three?" "I am thirty-three," replied a miner. "Stand up," said the evangelist, "let everyone see you." Wonderingly, the man rose to his feet, faced the audience, and again the silence fell.

"Look at him," cried the evangelist. "He is young, strong, healthy, in the prime of life. Thirty-three! They crucified my Lord when he was thirty-three. The strong hot blood, the joy of life was in His veins. He poured it out. He died. Only thirty-three! He died for you and me at thirty-three." The congregation broke into sobs, men and women cried aloud and pushed forward to the foot of the pulpit where they knelt confessing their sins, avowing their resolves to lead a new life. The flame of the revival had broken out again. Nothing more was said in the whole meeting. The rest was simply personal dealing with the penitents.

That is a remarkable illustration of the influence of the power of the crowd. The few words of the evangelist, even the one simple pathetic thought, the thought embodied in the original version of a famous hymn,

> "When I survey the wondrous cross
> Where the *young* Prince of Glory died"—

could not by themselves have had such an effect. It was the power of the crowd over the individual

that was then in evidence, as it has been, and is in every mass movement. It is that influence we are seeking now to understand.

First, let us explain our terms. We will call the casual gathering, temporarily united for some purpose or by some interest, a crowd, and the more permanent associations in which we meet one another, we can call groups. Our association with others in general we will term society.

We often contrast the individual and society. Yet there could not be individuals without society, the society which bred us and fed us, physically, and even more mentally. Our minds are social products. There is a story which credits, or perhaps discredits, King James with the desire to maroon some young children on a desert island with a deaf and dumb nurse to bring them up, in order to see whether they would not speak Hebrew, the language of the Garden of Eden! Some theological students, struggling with Hebrew irregular verbs, have wished such an experiment had been made in their case! They need not have wasted their wishes. Such children, of course, would grow up mentally deficient, gibbering, not speaking, making sounds, but dumb as regards speech. Physically, they might be healthy. They would show the normal instinctive tendencies, fear, anger, curiosity, and so forth, but, mentally, they would be hardly human at all. So much does society for our minds, that apart from it,

our mental inheritance would be less than that of the savage by far. Indeed it is not only the development, but the continuance of the powers of our mind that we owe to society. It is said that when the hideous cruelty of condemning a prisoner to perpetual solitary confinement has been practised, the unhappy wretch loses his reason in two or three years. Can we be surprised? To put the matter in another way. If we could borrow the famous time-machine invented by the imagination of a well-known novelist, and put back the clock five hundred years, can we imagine ourselves being the same selves in the fifteenth century as we are in the twentieth? How many of our ideas about religion, science, politics, and many another subject, could we have then possessed? We have but to ask, to realise the answer. Surely then there is hardly any point in any of us imagining "I" could have been the same "I" five hundred years ago. Our times are not merely the stage upon which we play our part in life's drama. They are the factory in which, mentally at least, we are made what we are.

So evident is this, that some thinkers have suggested that there is a social consciousness existing apart from the minds of individuals. That seems, however, to be an exaggeration. Bees in a swarm, behave differently from bees as individuals, but there is no swarm apart from the bees that make it, and no social consciousness

apart from the individuals who compose society. Yet men, like the bees, behave differently in society from the way they behave as individuals, and whilst there is no social consciousness or group mind apart from individuals, those terms are useful to denote the collective expression of individuals' minds.

It may appear that man is but the echo of his times. It has been said that no man rises more than an inch or so above the level of his age, and we have all heard of the argument whether there can be a perfect man without a perfect society. Perhaps there cannot be, yet a man can live in one society and think in another. There are quiet old gentlemen you may meet in the reading-room of the British Museum, whose bodies are in London, and whose minds mostly live in ancient Egypt or Assyria. Similarly the greatest leaders of men have lived ahead of their age in some communion of saints or fellowship of the immortals, towards which they have striven to uplift their age. That is evidence of the fact that we can transcend, or, one fears, even descend below, our times, and live mentally at one stage and physically at another.

What specially concerns us now, however, is the influence of our times upon us in religious matters. It will be useful to speak separately of the crowd, or mass-movements, and of the group, or the more intimate and lasting association with our fellows. We will first turn to the crowd, to mass-movements. What psychology

has to tell us about the influence of the crowd upon the individual, is very illuminating as regards some features of great religious movements, both in respect of their merits and their defects.

The first point is that the element of feeling or emotion is enhanced in the mass or crowd. We have only to realise how quickly a crowd is moved to anger, sympathy, or laughter to acknowledge that this is so. Even the joke that appears so witty when a popular entertainer told it from the platform, seems to lose some of its sparkle when next morning we re-tell it to a friend. We may modestly explain the loss by our own deficiencies as a raconteur, but even so the loss is due more to the difference in surroundings. Emotion is as contagious as measles. We catch the mood of our fellows, and Nature means us to do so, that we may feel together, for feeling is the germ of acting, and man is meant to act as part of a group, not merely as an individual. It is as difficult to be sad in the house of mirth as it is to be glad in the house of sadness.

Closely connected with this is another fact. We are far more suggestible in the mass. We believe readily what someone in the crowd says, as we should not believe it in the quiet of our own room. A few years ago I was at the Mortlake end of the course, waiting to see the finish of the boat-race. Presently there appeared one boat, the Cambridge boat, rowing

easily and alone. A buzz of amazement ran through the crowd. Where was Oxford? The man who knew, said Oxford had hit Hammersmith Bridge and sunk. No one questioned how he could know. The rumour ran from mouth to mouth through the crowd, which broke up, discussing it excitedly. It afterwards appeared that Oxford, unlucky in the toss on a rough day, had been waterlogged, and by this mischance, they were put out of the race. But the Hammersmith Bridge rumour was accepted as fact by hundreds, until later news corrected it. Similarly, I recollect years ago going to see Hamel in his monoplane fly over London. It was in the early days of flying, and for many spectators this was the first sight of an aeroplane. After a long wait, someone in the crowd cried, "There he is," and scores of people round me pointed to the distant empty sky, avowing that they could see a speck, and although I could not persuade myself that I did, I dared not express my doubt. The monoplane did arrive—but nearly an hour later!

Another characteristic is illustrated in this, namely, that the general level of intelligence in the crowd is less than that of the separate individuals who compose it, a reversal of the maxim of our old friend, or was he an enemy, Euclid, who said the whole is greater than the part. Here the whole intelligence is less than that of the parts. Instead of thinking for our-

selves, we are apt to think with the crowd. Incredible though it may seem, it is a fact that a jury once returned a verdict to the effect that there was no negligence on the part of the defendants, but that they awarded the plaintiff damages. The remarks of the judge were hardly to be called complimentary! How such a muddle arose it is difficult to say, but probably every individual in the twelve was wiser than the verdict with which by some amazing lapse of common sense he associated himself.

Another sign is lessened responsibility. The senseless violence of rioters and even of intelligent young gentlemen at noted seats of learning, on the occasion of what is euphemistically called a "rag," are cases in point. The crowd has no past or future to restrain it by tradition or forethought. The individual feels his anonymity, and allows the spirit of wanton mischief in him to slip its chain. Even a group, like a committee or council, will act in a way in which as individuals they would hesitate to act. The responsibility is divided, and each takes, so he feels, less than his own share.

All this may seem to be a black indictment against mass-movements in religion, if we proceed to apply it to our subject. One may admit that there is a dangerous side to all such movements, and we have been seeing the dangers before the advantages. In all fairness, however, we must acknowledge that this is but one side. Let us remind ourselves that there

is another side from which to regard these crowd characteristics of which we have been speaking. Properly controlled, they are not nearly so disadvantageous as they seem at first glance.

Let us grant it all: we feel more and think less, we are more ready to believe, and less restrained by caution, in a crowd or mass-movement than when alone. Yet may there not be a value in all this after all? Religion is an adventure, and those who have none of the adventurer's spirit will not embark upon it. It is true that the greatest of teachers told us to count the cost. The man who builds a tower, or the king who goes to war, He said, have to think out ways and means. Yet that same teacher called men from the fishing-smack, and the toll-collector's desk, without a single promise, saying simply, "Follow Me." They went, venturers all. Many of us are so swathed with what psychologists call "inhibitions," in other words caution, restraint, fear of mistakes, of ridicule, that when the golden moment comes, we are unable to act quickly. We hesitate and it is lost. Whilst to be carried away by a wave of feeling may be disastrous, we embark on no journey if we are afraid to launch out. What is needed is enough feeling, enough recklessness to dare and do, and enough sense to dare and do wisely. The mass-movement lifts us out of our ordinary selves, and, it may be, gives us the chance of a better self, a chance that comes perhaps in no other way.

If we now turn from crowds to groups, we shall see the permanent advantages of fellowship. What has been said so far, has chiefly concerned mass-movements, and because they have been prominent factors in all great religions, we have necessarily been interested in them. But the fellowship of the group, whilst it has less immediate intensity than the influence of the crowd, is more lasting. "You cannot be a whole," said Goethe, "unless you join a whole." "As iron sharpeneth iron so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend." "When two or three are gathered together in My name," runs one of the best-known sayings of Jesus. Two is the minimum for a fellowship. We are apt to judge the success of a movement by its crowds, and consider that unless churches are full, religion is lacking in power. Yet the strength of the ministry of Jesus, and also it seems of the Buddha, consisted in intensive teaching to a small group of disciples. A mass-movement is nothing but a mob without leaders, and the true force of any movement, religious or otherwise, lies in the persistent patience and wisdom of the comparatively small group who are its mainspring. In a mob, ideas work from the intellectually lower member to the higher. In a group the reverse direction takes place. That is why the group's influence is better than the crowd's.

One other point, of as much practical importance as psychological interest, remains. Man

lives by fellowship. Now when civilisation, our Western civilisation, comes into contact with uncivilised aboriginal peoples, it is inevitable that it upsets all their social systems and institutions. Crude and primitive though they be, based on magic rather than on rational principles, none the less such systems are the cement of these peoples' lives. The result, repeated with a regularity that cannot be mistaken, has been the deterioration of the lower races by contact with the more highly developed. To introduce them to roads, motor-cars, telegraphs, and all the blessings or otherwise of modern civilisation helps them nothing, if the fellowship and the social institutions which constituted their lives as a community are destroyed and not replaced. In such cases civilisation means anything but an advance. It is a disintegrating force. It breaks up what was a simple primitive community and introduces in its place nothing that can reconstitute the community. The result is that the old society soon collapses and its individuals become hangers-on to, dependents of, the new Western order to which they do not belong with results that are bound to be harmful to them.

Even the prohibitions Western civilisation introduces in the name of humanity and justice may have an indirect effect that is not wholly advantageous. For example, a warlike tribe, whose previous occupation was largely fighting and raiding, is brought under the rule of a Western power and forced to abandon these habits

—from our point of view an excellent thing. Yet these people are certainly not an industrial people, often not even an agricultural people. Their whole social organisation was built up on war. When their raids are stopped, it begins to disintegrate. They become a race without an occupation, which means a race deteriorating rapidly, probably falling into idleness and the new vices which contact with the Western world unhappily facilitates.

There is only one remedy. Mere prohibition of savage and lawless customs does not re-create a race. Mere introduction to the machinery of Western civilisation does not civilise. A new society must be built up, and that means a new fellowship. Only one fellowship has ever proved itself universal. That is a historical fact. That fellowship is the Commonwealth of Goodness, or in Christian phrase, the Kingdom of God.

If Socrates, the Buddha, and Jesus, had met in the flesh, they would have represented three different ages, three different countries, religions, ways of thought. Their differences would have been tremendous, and yet they would all have had something in common, for goodness is the same everywhere in spirit, however it differs in form. But if three of the world's worst men had met, they would have nothing in common, for evil is always unsocial disintegration. It implies each for himself, and others only as a tool for personal ends. If there be honour among thieves that merely shows that there is goodness mixed in

the thief's nature, but in so far as the thief acts as a thief, his honour disappears. He is breaking the bond of communal loyalty.

Goodness, then, is the only true universal fellowship. Other fellowships are international, but one and all they are fellowships of certain classes within the nations, not universal fellowship. If therefore we would replace what we destroy when the civilisation of the West impinges on the primitive peoples of the world, we must build up in them a new social and religious unity; and at any rate it is true that the chief attempt to do this is in the work of Christian missions, which seek to unite the partial fellowships of the different races in the greater unity of the Kingdom of God.

CHAPTER XI

HEALTH AND HEALING: THE RELIGION OF BODY AND SOUL

EVERYBODY knows what the wisest man in the world cannot explain, and that is the influence of mind and body on each other. A thought passing through our mind can bring a blush to the cheek or a tear to the eye. It is no less true that the state of the body can affect the mind. We all know that never yet was philosopher, the philosopher who is supposed to be master of his mind, who could bear the toothache patiently! The exact measurements that can be made in a psychological laboratory show how the effects of sensations are promptly registered in the body. For example, a pleasant sensation increases the pulse, deepens the breathing, and so forth, whilst Pavlov has shown, by measuring the salivary secretions of his dogs, that their mouths begin to water at the sound of the dinner bell, even apart from the smell of food. So delicately balanced is the mechanism of this clay, that it responds at once to what is before the mind. We cannot explain the relationship, but the influence of mind on body is a normal everyday fact of experience.

Sometimes that influence is more than normal, and in this connection there are many interesting facts which bear upon mind healing. It is true of course that this power works in two ways, and the influence of mind on body may often be harmful rather than healthful. Some while ago, in a London office, some clerks arranged to play a trick upon one of their fellows. The first conspirator said casually, "Hallo, what's up? You look bad." Then another strolled in, a few minutes later, saying, "Are you ill, old chap?" and so on, till the victim, who at first protested he was as fit as a fiddle, began to think he must be ill, and before the morning was out, began to complain of pain, went home, and remained away for a week! I know of another case where a fortune-teller told a very superstitious woman she would die at the age of thirty-four. She was then a year or so less than that age, but when the thirty-fourth birthday came, she took to her bed, and within the course of the year, she died. The subject was given to alcoholic excess, but otherwise was physically sound, and there was nothing else to account for her early death except her implicit belief in her fate. Amongst primitive savages who have broken a tabu, or believe that a spell has been put upon them, it is not at all rare for death to ensue, simply and solely by the absolute belief that it will.

Our present interest lies however rather on the other side, and the triumph of mind over

pain is even more strongly witnessed than the harm that comes when the mind yields. In the *Life* of Sir Walter Scott, we read that several of his books were composed during a long and painful illness, and that he would lie upon his couch and groan with torment, but when dialogue of peculiar animation was in progress, spirit seemed to triumph altogether over matter. He got up, and pacing the room, acted the parts as he dictated them. It is said that John Richard Green kept himself alive by sheer force of will for five months, whilst he completed his last book. Everyone knows the story of Bede translating St. John's Gospel as the sands of the hour-glass of his life ran out rapidly. At three o'clock on Ascension Day, "It is time," he said, "that I returned to Him who formed me out of nothing. My merciful Judge well foresaw my life for me. The time of my dissolution draws nigh, for I desire to die and be with Christ." As evening fell, the scribe said, "Dear Master, there is yet one sentence not written." Bede dictated it saying, "It is well." He then sang Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost, and as he named the Holy Spirit his own spirit returned to God.

If we now approach the subject of mind-healing from the psychological standpoint, these facts which we have seen relating to the effect of mind on body, both normally and in exceptional cases, indicate that religious healing is not unique, but a special illustration of a recognised

psychological process. From the standpoint of psychology all the various centres and methods of healing manifest similar features, and psychologically the effect on the patient is the same in all cases. It is that aspect with which we are concerned. Many will say the psychological side is not the only one, and that we need not deny. Some may ask do you not acknowledge the power of God? I do, but simply to say that God heals does not explain how. Moreover, the power of God works in man according to his faith, and faith is a psychological factor. During the war I was visiting two men, critically ill. I asked both if they would like me to pray with them. The first said, "As you please, Padre," but took no notice of the prayer. The second said, "Yes, please do," and when I had finished said, "That's done me good, Sir." It is a psychological fact that his belief gave him just the extra strength to carry him through the crisis, a strength which the other could not summon to his aid. Literally, I believe, that man's faith saved him and he pulled through.

When we attempt to estimate mind-healing, psychologically, however, a certain difficulty meets us at the outset. A scientific worker, giving an account of the experiments he has conducted, is honourably bound to record absolutely the percentage of complete successes, partial successes, and failures. In all accounts of mind-healing, we are told of the successes and of the partial successes perhaps, but of the

failures hardly ever. From the scientific standpoint that makes the results of very much less value than otherwise they might be. It is impossible to estimate effects upon such a basis. There is not the least reason to doubt that all the mind-healing movements produce a number of cures, some of them complete and permanent cures, but upon that evidence alone, apart from the failures, nothing can be said of scientific value.

It is easy, however, to criticise the mind-healers for stressing their successes, and forget that we all are apt to do the same. Not only so, if they stressed their failures they would diminish their successes, for the element of faith would be at once discouraged. To take a just analogy, a medical man writing for his profession in a medical journal, will give the percentage of successes and failures he has met with in applying some new treatment, and will give them with impartial correctness. But that same man would not tell, and would be very unwise to tell, the patient he is treating, of the failures. He would probably say with perfect truthfulness, "Cheer up. I've seen some wonderful cures with the use of this treatment. Only lately I had a patient far worse than you, and he's now gone off to the Continent for a holiday. We'll soon have you on your feet again." Under the circumstances, can we expect the mind-healer to publish abroad his failures? True, we might ask for them in private, but mind-healing

is not a technical subject in the same sense as medicine is, and whilst we may regret the incompleteness of the evidence, it seems inevitable under the circumstances.

It is not necessary to dwell upon cases of mind-healing. They are so numerous that they are known to all. The only matter that can be disputed is the percentage of permanent cures, and the characteristics of the complaints that can be permanently cured. We can take it for granted, however, that genuine cures are effected in certain cases, and that is sufficient for us to proceed to two questions of no little interest. Firstly, what is the psychological explanation of mind-healing, and secondly, what religious significance does it possess?

From the psychological standpoint, we notice first that every impulse and idea that comes into our mind tends to have some bodily expression. Of course many are checked by various causes, and do not result in any expression, but they tend to it. The sight of a burnt match on the floor is enough to make the tidily-minded pick it up, often without being fully aware of doing so, but if it is in a stranger's house, the impulse is checked, and the match is left. Even the man in a brown study, lost in thought, shows by his furrowed brows and the tightened corners of his mouth, the bodily expression of his thoughts. Every impulse and idea tends to express itself in the body, and if there is nothing to check that impulse, it is very potent. Now, broadly speak-

ing the idea of pain or disease tends to produce it, and the idea of its absence to remove it, in proportion as the counteracting ideas are absent. Again, one says "tends" rather than "does," though undoubtedly very often it does not merely tend, it actually produces or removes the pain or even disease.

Accordingly, whether deliberately or not, we notice that all mind-healers try first to remove the hindering ideas, to raise the patient's faith, to fill his mind with the sense of being healed. That is why many of them prefer to work in public. The patient sees others healed, or hears their testimonies about their healing, and naturally that has a remarkable effect on his own mind. The result is to detach his mind from the thought of his sickness, which of course is a hindering thought, and to fill it with ideas of health and healing, which are helpful towards a cure.

A further point is that concentration of attention has the effect of helping to remove or to increase pain. A soldier told me once that in a fierce hand-to-hand fight he was wounded in the leg, but felt nothing whatever, until after the fighting was over, and then he was conscious that his feet were wet. It was the blood trickling down from a bullet wound in his calf. Some of us can confirm this by recollecting how, in the excitement of a football match, when our attention has been concentrated upon the game, we have received nasty kicks and have been quite unaware, till afterwards, of the injury. Others

may confess the not uncommon experience of the toothache vanishing as they walked towards the dentist's door! Now pain is the chief symptom of disease. It is hard to believe that much can be wrong with us when we have no pain. In the excitement of the meeting, the patient, perhaps brought to the place of healing after lonely weeks in a sickroom, is helped to forget his pain, to think of other things, and finding the pain gone, jumps up declaring he is cured. In all honesty one must admit that if all that has happened is the removal of the pain, the patient will not be permanently better, but will relapse and that this removal of symptoms is not a cure, though it is often accepted both by the patient and the public as such.

From the physiological point of view—that is to say as far as the nerves of the body which convey feelings are concerned, what happens may be roughly expressed thus. Normally when a nerve ending is stimulated, the stimulus is conveyed to the brain by an ingoing nerve, connected in the brain with an outgoing nerve, and so, to borrow a metaphor from electricity, a circuit is set up. When we do not feel the stimulation, it is because the brain fails to react upon the outgoing nerve, and so does not complete the circuit. When we feel what we call "imaginary" pain, that is pain without any apparent physical cause, it appears that the brain sets the outgoing response at work without receiving an ingoing stimulus. In one case, therefore, it

stops the circuit from being completed and we do not feel, although an actual stimulus is being applied. In the other, it creates the circuit and we do feel, though no stimulus is applied. In mind-healing, the excitement and concentration have the effect of checking the normal circuit from being completed and the pain ceases to be felt, even though the cause persists.

If we ask, Does mind-healing heal, every psychologist and every medical man will agree that in all sickness there is both a mental and a material element. In some the proportion may be "fifty-fifty" in others ninety to ten, either way. Illness which is largely mentally induced is naturally most likely to be mentally relieved, though even in so physical an happening as a broken limb, the patient's mind can help towards recovery in some degree. Both medical men and psychologists, however, refuse to admit that all kinds of sickness are equally suitable for mental healing and disagree sharply with those mind-healers who claim to be able indiscriminately to heal every kind of disease by mental methods alone.

It is these indiscriminate and partisan methods which injure the true work of mind-healing, and, in all fairness, one must admit that others as well as religious healers, are apt to be partisans. On the Continent, even more than in England, the followers of Freud, Jung, and Adler appear as three rival schools of psychotherapy. Or again, some psychologists employ hypnotism and

suggestion, others dogmatically assert that neither is any use. If we are right in holding that there are similar psychological mechanisms employed in all systems of mind-healing, we need to unify the various theories, and apply whatever type of treatment seems best suited for the particular case. It is not possible sharply to distinguish disease that is psychogenic, or mentally caused, from that which is physiogenic, or caused by bodily disorder, but none the less, it remains that to offer any one type of treatment as equally suitable for all cases, is the worst service one can render to mind-healing. It obscures the true sphere and value of the mental element in healing, and leads to disappointment that may neutralise a faith that in other circumstances would help towards a cure.

The last point is the religious significance of mind-healing. To say, as one sometimes hears it said that pain is contrary to God's will is too sweeping, for surely it would be a very bad thing for me if I could put my hand into the fire and feel no pain. The same nerves convey pleasant and unpleasant sensations, and what is pleasant under certain circumstances may be painful under others, for example food when hungry and when sick. Pain has its uses and necessity. But disease is an abnormality, and therefore, like error, ugliness and sin, we feel it ought not to be and are as justified in appealing to our religious faith to combat it, as we are in calling upon that faith to combat sin. The religious

factor in health is of enormous importance, and one of the most urgent needs of the day is that our methods of healing should come together in unity.

As the position now stands, many of those who practise mental-healing refuse to use medical science or surgical aid, though it does not seem consistent to teach that in New Testament times religious healing was divorced from medical means, when one of the evangelists was known as "the beloved physician." Nor does it seem just to take credit for the successes and blame the patient's lack of faith for the failures. A few years ago, I was asked to advise upon a certain case, and at my suggestion the patient consulted an adherent of her own Church, who is prominently connected with mental-healing. For two or three years after she was free from the distressing attacks of her complaint, and radiant with happiness. Then suddenly the old trouble returned. She went to the healer who told her that she had lost faith. God, he said, wrought a miracle and you were full of faith and gratitude. Then you came to accept it as a matter of course, forgot your gratitude, lost your faith, and God has removed His aid. The poor girl accepted this as correct, and now takes all the blame upon herself. To me it seems a cruel judgment. Of course, at first, in the newness of it all, there is a mental exultation and thankfulness that cannot be maintained at the same level. But to represent the relapse as

due to God's withdrawing of His grace under those circumstances is certainly not to represent God as we have learnt to know Him in the teaching of Jesus, and an action of this kind is a serious blot upon the mental-healer's methods.

Not only, however, is the religious healer inclined to despise psychology and medicine, but the psychologist and medical man often ignore the importance of the religious factor. A number of those who practise psychoanalysis and similar methods, profess no religious beliefs. That of course is a personal matter, but it becomes a professional defect if it leads them to undervalue the importance of the religious factor in their patients. Similarly, members of the medical profession, to the skill and unselfishness of which I should like to pay the warmest tribute, often feel that their task is simply and solely with the body, and even if they suspect a religious element enters into the patient's trouble, feel it is not their place to deal with it. That may be so, yet is it not the more necessary that there should be some means whereby they can work in touch with spiritual advisers to whom they can send their patients when they think that they would benefit thereby, and similarly that the healers should be equally free and ready to send on those who come to them for treatment to psychologists and medical men?

It should be within the bounds of practical possibility to set up some co-ordination. A certain number of clergy and ministers who show

aptitude for the work should be specially trained in psychology, and possibly even, in some cases, take a medical qualification. As we previously said, it was once held that anatomy and drugs were the subjects in which doctors should be trained and languages and dogmas the proper training for the clergy, and in both cases the mind was left out as insignificant! We are wiser now. The difficult cases which present themselves to the mind-healer cannot be tackled by every clergyman, yet some are entirely and admirably suited for such work. The Church should recognise this, be responsible for setting apart and training a ministry of healing which would have the confidence of medical men. At present every clergyman has people coming to him who should consult a physician, and every physician has cases which are really cases for spiritual help. But sooner or later must come the day when the care of the body, of the mind and of the soul will meet together and when the spiritual adviser, the psychologist and the medical man will co-operate in a united ministry of healing, and the body and soul God hath joined will no longer be put asunder.

CHAPTER XII

THE MYSTIC WAY: THINGS THAT PASS UNDERSTANDING

THERE is a glamour, a touch of romance that clings like a faint scent to the very word Mystic. In the days when mankind was very young, no doubt our primitive ancestors squatted awestruck before the medicine-man, the mysterious holy man who conversed with gods and spirits, made the rain come down and cast spells on the unlucky who offended him. His person was sacred, hedged around with tabus. He belonged to another world, rarer, deeper and more wonderful than this commonplace world of their acquaintance. They feared and envied him.

Times and customs change says the proverb, but there is much the same human nature as there ever was. In all religions the mystic is still an object of reverent curiosity, and our modern world dearly loves someone romantic, be he a romantic sinner or a romantic saint, but the saint for preference. Most of us know from experience too much about sinners to find them quite so interesting! The romantic saint moves against a less familiar background.

Of course there are the critics also who avow that mystics are epileptics or semi-insane creatures, and that their revelations and visions can be closely paralleled by those of psycho-degenerates. Hysteria and hypnotism are called upon to explain the mystics, and altogether when the critic has finished with them, one would think there is nothing left, but to have all mystics certified and put under restraint!

What is the truth about it all? Frankly let us admit that there have been many so-called mystics who have been practically border-line cases, but there have also been mystics who have been the sanest and strongest of men. One may certainly put St. Paul among the mystics. He had his unutterable visions and revelations. Wherefore the critical have described his vision on the road to Damascus as a "discharging lesion of the occipital cortex," so that now you know all about it! Some even have hinted at epilepsy as St. Paul's thorn in the flesh. Yet say all that and more, yet it remains that St. Paul was the greatest and most practical churchman who ever lived, and one of the most influential men in the whole history of the world.

Nor is it at all true to imagine that mysticism is necessarily at war with reason. Those of us who went to school long enough ago to remember that deposed monarch Euclid's sway, never found much mysticism in Euclid. Yet a large part of the first six books of Euclid may be credited to Pythagoras whose name still lingers

in connection with what we used to call Euclid I 47, the immortal demonstration that the square on the side opposite the right angle in a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides, though ironically enough it is not his proof that Euclid gave. Yet Pythagoras, the great master of mathematics, was a mystic. One can imagine the thrill of those days when mathematical truth, pure, universal, applicable to earth and heaven was first dawning on man's mind. It opened a wonder world to Pythagoras

> "Then felt I like some watcher of the skies
> When a new planet swims into his ken"—

perhaps that was why this great mathematician and musician was also a mystic, and held amongst other things, the views to which Shakespeare refers:

> "To hold opinion with Pythagoras
> The animals infuse themselves
> Into the trunks of men."

The last great philosopher of the ancient world, who represented the last resistance of Greek philosophy to that of Christianity, was Plotinus, an intellectual mystic if ever there was one. Of him we are told that so greatly did he despise the world of the senses as compared with the world beyond them, that he was offended at receiving a birthday present, because it was a reminder that he possessed any-

thing so gross as a body! Plotinus believed that the consummation of philosophy was mystical union with God, or the One Beyond Intelligence, as he called God. The reason was this. Unity with God cannot be attained by thought, for in all thought there are two things, the subject who thinks and the object thought about. So long then as we think about God, we are not one with Him. Plotinus therefore went beyond the bounds of reason, and attained mystical union with the ultimate principle of the universe. His case and that of Pythagoras are quite enough evidence to quote, though much more could be quoted to prove that there is a genuine mysticism that may be super-rational, but certainly is not irrational.

Mystics then can be of both kinds, the neurotic and socially worthless, and those also who prove an inspiration and uplift to their fellows. How can we distinguish them? Prof. De Sanctis, who is professor of psychology at the University of Rome, has said " Modern psychopathology having at present reached a maturity which it did not possess in previous decades, now has many scientific arguments to advance against certain theories and hypotheses of former times. The true mystics and the great converts, notwithstanding their neurotic qualities and certain incidental morbid symptoms, can be readily recognised and distinguished from mystics and converts who are insane, or who are psycho-degenerates; and this without having recourse

to the usual loophole of 'value,' which is to some extent an extra-psychological argument. We assume that true mystics and converts are extreme variations in the field of the normal variation of human personality." I have quoted at length to make it clear that in the opinion of this distinguished psychologist there are psychological grounds on which to separate the true mystic from the abnormal sort. Not merely the value of their lives, but psychological characteristics in their mysticism indicate to which type they belong.

With this assurance, we will take leave of the controversy, and the degenerate mystics with it, and go on to speak of a few of the true mystics. Amongst Christian mystics none is more captivating than St. Francis, "God's little poor man," as they called him, the gentlest of reformers and the merriest of Christians. We hear an evil report of the days in which he lived. Dark terror hung like a pall over Italy. The country was devastated by war. The fields were desolate, for those who ploughed and sowed had no guarantee that they would reap before the next marching army spoiled the land. Soldiers were sent to guard such labourers as did work in the fields from bandits, who waylaid and robbed all, or carried men off for ransom, and tortured those whose ransoms were not paid. The traveller it was said would as soon meet the devil on his path than one of these. Wolves multiplied in the deserted fields,

and mad with hunger, attacked towns and villages in packs, sometimes even breaking through the mud walls of the labourers' cottages and devouring the inmates. Against these terrors and evils, little help came from the priests and friars whose moral condition was perhaps lower in the 13th century than at any time either before or since.

Into this dark world of sin came St. Francis, like a sunbeam. It is interesting to notice what Machiavelli said of him: "all religions," he declared, "must be again and again rejuvenated by a return to their original principles. Christianity would have become entirely extinct had not St. Francis and St. Dominic renewed its life and kindled it afresh in the hearts of men by their imitation of Jesus Christ. They saved religion but they destroyed the Church." What Machiavelli meant by the words "destroyed the Church" was that such men as St. Francis cared little for ecclesiastical rules and order, and everything for man. The statement is not wholly true, but it would be true to say they helped to destroy a false conception of the Church.

Legend and miracle have gathered round St. Francis as the ivy clings to the tree, but beneath it all the human outline still shows. We see him kissing the leper, preaching in the popular language to the poor, telling them tales, laughing and crying by turns. We hear of him gathering the peasants and shepherds

into a stable at Christmas, and as they knelt around the manger, St. Francis read the story of Bethlehem and spoke of the Christ-child. If St. Thomas à Kempis wrote of the imitation of Christ, St. Francis it was who practised it.

Non-Christian religions have their mystics no less than has Christianity. Islam is to some extent a severe religion, with a strict insistence on law but it has produced in those called the Sufis (the name is said to mean wool, and refers to the rough woollen garments of the poorer classes), mystics whose thirst for God cannot be quenched from the Qurān alone. India has been the home of mystics from time immemorial, and in no nation in the world is more genuine reverence paid to the holy man than in India, whose toiling millions look up to see as he passes a man who represents to them the one who has attained to reality in a world of illusions. China has given the world an ancient system of mystical philosophy. Medieval Judaism produced the mysteries of the Kabala. Every Buddhist saint has the mystic's temperament. Mysticism is not the peculiarity of a few well-known mystics—St. Teresa, St. Catherine, Suso, St. John of the Cross and others well known in Christian history. It is something world wide, ranging from the mediumistic possession of the primitive medicine man to the holy rapture of the saint, and as a world-wide trait in human experience, psychology cannot ignore mysticism.

If we ask now what psychology has to say about the mystics, how it regards them from its own particular standpoint, the first thing we must ask is this. The mystic is one who claims a direct immediate experience of God. Can psychology recognise that such a thing is possible? Some, like the American psychologist, Professor Leuba, who has spent much time in studying mysticism, say flatly it cannot. They do not deny the reality of the mystic's experience, but they challenge the explanation the mystics give to it. The point is this, an experience is one thing, but to state the cause of it is another. The experience is immediate, but we infer the cause. For example a flash of light flickers one evening in the sky. Three people see it, and all agree that they did so, one is sure that it was lightning, another thinks it a meteor, a third says it was due to faulty contact in one of the shoes of an electric train and points out that the railway lies in that direction. The experience is undeniable, but the explanations can be argued. So it is held that the mystics infer their experience is due to God, but sceptical psychologists can admit the experience and decline the explanation.

We may agree at once that, ordinarily, experiences do not guarantee our explanations of them, but the point that is overlooked is that if the mystic does experience God, such an experience is unique, and no parallel with the

experience of ordinary objects can hold. If one likes to say so, it is a miracle. Anyone has a perfect right to say he is not convinced regarding the miracle, but no one can say that it is absolutely impossible for such a miracle to happen. If there be a God, and a God in touch with man, a God in whom we live and move and have our being, we may conceivably know God as immediately and directly as we know our own thoughts. The great French thinker Bergson has told us that whilst our reason explains reality to us, it is by intuition and not by reason that we grasp the existence of reality at all. If God exists, He is the supreme reality, and it is impossible for anyone to declare that no man can grasp God directly and immediately by intuition. The mystic then is unassailable, only, of course his experience whilst it convinces him, and cannot be gainsaid even by the sceptic, will not convince those who do not possess it. The mystic says "I experience God." The sceptic may say "I don't," but he has no right to say "you cannot."

As Professor Pratt puts it "While the psychology of religion must have a free hand, and while it is hopeless to look to it for a proof of anything transcendent, nothing that it can say should prevent the religious man who wishes to be perfectly loyal to logic and loyal to truth, seeing in his own spiritual experiences the genuine influence of a living God." Those

are sane and sound words. Psychology cannot be made a buttress to defend religion or a weapon to attack it. It is a science that investigates its working in our minds. The mystic then believes he has an immediate experience of God, and there is nothing in psychology either to prove or deny that. Many of us who are not mystics have in our own way a similar experience, and we may be perfectly loyal to logic and truth and yet see in those experiences the hand of God. The mystics, with their keener vision and deeper experiences, bring us welcome corroboration of what we also feel.

A further point follows here. I recollect once speaking to a girl who possessed a fine voice and was training hard to fulfil her ambitions as a singer. She had just come back from a concert where she had heard for the first time, one of the greatest living prima donnas. "Well," I said "you've had a great time to-night I suppose." "Great indeed," she replied, "I feel utterly miserable." "Why?" I retorted in astonishment. "Why," she flashed back, "why, I know now I can't sing, I shall never sing, I'm a frog, I just croak." I couldn't help smiling, but more in sympathy than in mirth. The great mystics show us in the same way our own spiritual ordinariness. Like the great musician who breaks open the inner treasuries of music, they show us the reserves, the vast reservoir of spiritual energy, that we

never tap. There seems to be no psychological reason why we should not share them. But the personalities of most of us are walled in by restrictions, and perhaps we have built those walls ourselves. Most of us are afraid of the deep uncharted seas and live in the little harbour of our own conventional ordinary selves. Youth's possibilities settle down to orderliness and ordinariness. Thus we live and thus we die, without tasting the rarer fruit that our own nature might have borne. We see in the mystic all we have never been, and wonder whether we could have felt those depths.

Again, the mystic is the witness to what we have already said is the essence of religion, the belief that the world beyond sense is greater, more real, more important than the world of the senses. In our better moments, all of us believe that, but the mystic's unwavering confirmation of it, fortifies our faith. Trevelyan, in his *Age of Wyclif*, tells of the burning of the heroic tailor, John Badby, of Evesham, who in 1410 suffered at Smithfield. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V, came personally to bid him recant. Trevelyan says "It was a remarkable and significant scene. The hope and pride of England had come in person to implore a tailor to accept life, but he had come in vain. At last the pile was lit. The man's agonies and contortions were taken for signals of submission. Henry ordered the faggots to be pulled away, and renewed his offer and

entreaties, but again to no effect. The flames were lit a second time, and the body disappeared for ever."

The endurance of such torture witnesses far more than volumes, to the depth of the conviction that the unseen realities count for more than the dearest values of life. The mystic shows us the true heart of things.

The psychological study of mysticism links mysticism very frequently with ascetic practices, but mystics agree that asceticism is only a negative or preparatory stage. The characteristics of the mystical state are singularly similar in all the mystics. The states come. They are not sought. All that seeking can do is to prepare the way. The mystics seek to cleanse and purge their souls, to make ready, but the light comes. When it comes, it is illuminative and gives a degree of intensity and reality no ordinary consciousness gives. Mystical states pass as quickly as they come, and no words can ever describe adequately what they mean. The reproach that mysticism is generally "mistycism," leaves the mystic untouched. He has experienced and he knows whether or not he can explain. None the less, this extreme individualism of the mystic is a weakness. True, there have been bands and fellowships of mystics, yet it remains that the mystic normally is spiritually solitary, and religion is emphatically social. It is strange to realise that we do not usually reckon Jesus amongst the mystics, because

religion to Him was so entirely expressed in terms of others. Though none penetrated so near to God as He, it is true, as Dr. Glover has said, that the type of holiness Jesus preached can be practised by a man with a wife and eight children. The religion of the family hearth has done more for the world than the religion of the anchorite.

Things that pass understanding, was the subtitle of this talk. Mysticism brings us to that side of life where reason fails to light us farther. May I be allowed to depart from the strictly psychological standpoint in closing, for psychology does not pass beyond the bounds of reason? If we would be loyal to science we must never allow superstition to begin when reason fails, but we must also remember that no single science nor all the sciences, completely cover the world of truth, and we have intuitions, apprehensions of ultra-scientific truth, truth indeed, yet that which passes understanding. I sat once through the night, watching the ebbing tide of a human life. After hours of unconsciousness, the laboured breathing eased, and a radiant smile transfigured the weary face on the pillow. Three people were in the room, all saw it, but before any could speak the smile faded, and the last breath whispered away. I speak of what I saw and know. There are, I believe, purely physiological explanations offered of such a happening, but——! I give my personal belief simply, and

no more, and it is that the end of this life is the threshold of a wider life, and possibly to some as they take the last step of the earthly journey, comes a vision of the greater world of which the mystic tells us, and they greet the unseen with a smile.

CHAPTER XIII

"AS A DREAM WHEN ONE AWAKETH": THE DREAM WORLD AND THE WAKING WORLD

THERE is a story of the oldest inhabitant who sat all day long on the settle by the kitchen fireplace, and when asked how he passed the time, replied, "Sometimes I sets and thinks, and other times I just sets!" We may be sure that at those other times, the old gentleman dozed peacefully, for there are only two conditions in which our minds exist. The one is attention, and that means doing, experiencing, or thinking something. The other is sleep, and we can include in this such unusual states as coma, trances, anæsthesia and so forth.

When the mind is not attentive, it sleeps. We are never inattentive, only wrongly attentive. Inattention means attending to something else. We sometimes wonder why our dog can sleep so much. The reason is simply that when nothing attracts his attention, he slips off naturally into the other state, that of sleep. Babies and very old folk, because their minds are less active, sleep much more than the rest of us.

There is a mystery about sleep, because we can never catch ourselves slipping over the

borderline between waking and sleeping. We lie still, idly thinking, then our thoughts grow blurred, and then sleep catches us unawares, and as the Irishman put it, you never know you are asleep till you wake up! In deep sleep even, we do not lose all consciousness. The fact that we can sleep through various noises, and yet rouse at a pre-arranged signal shows that the mind is still receiving impressions. After all, heart and lungs and many other bodily processes work a twenty-four hour day, so it is no particular hardship that the brain is not allowed to go wholly off duty during the night.

Further evidence of the brain's activity during sleep is given us of course by dreams. Let us first of all notice a few points of general psychological interest concerning them. Possibly we dream continuously all night, but remember only those fragments of our dreams which were in our minds as we roused. This is not certain, of course, nor is the belief that dreams are instantaneous. It is known that we can go through a long dream in a very short time, but if we recollect the number of impressions that flash through our mind in the second or two when we have, shall we say, a remarkably narrow squeak in the car, we shall realise what a lot of thinking can be packed into a very short space. However, short or long, dreams show the activities of the unconscious and subconscious mind during sleep. In Bergson's phrase

the will is "disinterested" in sleep, and the mind runs itself.

Few things have come into the centre of interest in psychology within recent years so suddenly as have dreams. The older text-books disregarded them as mere whimsies. Now, through the work of Freud especially, dreams have been invested with great importance. Freud's celebrated theory that dreams are repressed wishes in symbolic disguise has not been accepted by all. Some, like the late W. H. R. Rivers, think that dreams are the expression of mental conflict, others that in dreams the unconscious, like coming events, casts its shadow before it, which is a curious return to the old view that dreams foreshadow future happenings. Personally, I incline to think that no single theory accounts for all dreams, and that some dreams have quite untraceable sources, but I agree that many are an expression of tendencies, desires, conflicts within, and show us a hidden side of our nature. Others I take to be without any meaning, or at least without any ascertainable meaning.

It is probably true that the manifest content of most dreams does not show their actual significance, and that some objects in a dream are symbols and are not to be taken at their face value. But all attempts to show that certain objects always symbolise he same ideas have failed. There is no proof of universal symbolism, and, accordingly, the

interpretation of a dream is always more or less provisional.

About certain points, however, there need be no doubt. All dreams contain some reference to recent happenings, and almost all contain also some reference to childhood experiences. For example, in my waking life, I am fond of and interested in cattle. But in my dreams I am invariably frightened of them, because as a child I was chased by a bull. If any will take the trouble to analyse their own dreams, they are likely to find some similar reversion to the attitudes of childhood. One notices also that dreams are more intense than waking life. Dream joys are more exquisite, dream sorrows more poignant, and even dream humour more funny than are similar experiences when we are awake. We are never surprised in a dream. The most amazing transformations happen, things that put Cinderella's coach into the shade, and we take them all for granted.

It is interesting to notice that we are able, to some extent, to control our dreams. One way is by letting the mind saturate itself before sleep with the topic we wish to exclude from our dreams. Interest is thus worked out. But most people can stop any particular dream by simply willing, before sleep, not to dream about it. That seldom fails, yet, curiously, one seems quite unable in the same manner to induce dreams.

Turning now from this side of our subject, one can hardly omit all notice of alleged super-

natural manifestations in dreams. Upon this point it is best to maintain an open mind. Let me, however, relate one story for which I can speak with some certainty, as I know one of the persons concerned. The representative of a London firm was abroad when a favourite daughter died suddenly. As he could not return in time for the funeral, it was decided not to let him know. To the utter astonishment of all, he cabled asking what was the matter. A non-committal reply was sent, but as soon as the man returned, he came to the office of his firm and said simply, "I did not believe your telegram. I know she is dead." How did you know? Who told you? was the reply, and he said simply, "She did." He then related quietly and unemotionally, how one night in his room, he felt rather than saw his daughter, and felt rather than heard her bid him farewell. On comparison with the hours, and allowing for the difference in time, the manifestation occurred almost at the hour of death. As only the firm knew the man's whereabouts, it seems wholly impossible to believe any ordinary communication reached him, and he is not a man given to any interest in things supernatural. If such a happening were unique one might call it a coincidence, but things of that kind happen too often to be accounted for by coincidence. If one believes in telepathy, the experience may have been telepathic, yet to say so is but to substitute one mystery for another.

On the other hand, one must recollect that occasionally similar happenings occur when there seems to be no event that corresponds with them. Another case for which I can personally vouch, was that of a lady whose husband was in Switzerland. She had a terrifying dream of her husband being in great peril, and her little girl, sleeping in the same room, woke, crying aloud about her father. Thoroughly alarmed the wife telegraphed to Switzerland, and had a reply saying that all was well. When the husband returned, they found by comparing notes, that on the night in question, he was sleeping soundly, just pleasantly tired by a long tramp the day before. He is still fit and well. What is one to make of that? Of course the child's dream may be explained by suggesting that the mother cried out in her sleep and set the child dreaming, but the mother's dream seems to have had no justification despite its vivid suggestion of harm.

Upon such subjects all one can say is that we need more knowledge. There is a large body of evidence that things which are inexplicable, happen. Of these we often hear. We hear less of such occasions as that I have just mentioned, when similar happenings seem pure coincidence without ulterior meaning. What is needful is to investigate scientifically and with an open mind, all the available evidence, and to continue our research, without making up our minds beforehand what

we expect to find. The same thing applies to those dreams that are claimed to be divine revelations. No believer in God would say it is impossible that guidance should come from Him in this way, yet it is clear how readily faith may degenerate into superstition if we uncritically accept dreams as revelations.

If we turn now to think of the religious side of our subject, some may think that so physical a thing as sleep can have no spiritual significance. Yet the easy distinction between physical and spiritual is rather a shallow gulf after all. The great principle of the unity of nature shows us that from the furthest star to the tiniest dew-drop, the same laws run, and since our souls and bodies were made by the same Designer, there is no reason to think that the laws of the universe and of life have no analogies in the spiritual world.

Sleep is part of the universal law that all living things have alternate cycles of rest and activity. The plants have summer growth and winter rest, even the heart and the lungs rest between their movements. The planets whirl on ceaselessly, but they do not live. One wonders sometimes why one-third of our all too brief threescore years and ten must be given to rest. How much more might we put into our lives if sleep were needless! Yet after all, a man's life consisteth not in the multitude of things that he doeth. Our natures are essentially active, and it may be well for us to

know our limitations, to learn that we cannot continuously do what our busy will demands from us. Our will is master of our bodies, but it might be their tyrant if it had not at times to abate its demands, lay aside its activities, and let the body sleep. It is not good to be the slave of any tyrant, even if the tyrant be our own will. It may be a good thing for our character to learn not only what we can do, but what we cannot, to be reminded of our limitations. During the day we take care of ourselves. In sleep we have to leave ourselves uncared for, save by that Power that neither slumbers nor sleeps. It may be that this very resignation of our own charge over ourselves and our ways is an essential part of life's schooling.

Biologists, I believe, divide sea-animals into "swimmers" and "drifters." Our busy nature inclines us to applaud swimming and despise drifting. Yet swimming, or activity that is to say, has its dangers just as much as has drifting. Ceaseless activity often defeats its own ends. The consulting rooms of psychoanalysts are filled with patients who have broken down, who are nervous wrecks. Hard work hurts no one if sufficient rest, food and exercise are given. What causes nervous breakdown is overworry rather than overwork, and that means that the mind has been kept working feverishly trying to meet situations before they arise, situations that never may arise. Little wonder it gives way under the strain. The patient has

been defying the universal law of Nature for all that lives, the law embodied in the fact of sleep, namely, that rest is essential. He has given his mind no rest, and the mind has broken down under the strain. The significance of sleep is in the warning it affords us that we must learn to rest and relax.

Watch a little child asleep. Few sights are prettier. Every limb, every muscle is perfectly relaxed, as the child lies in its cot in supreme peace. I have watched nervous wrecks in the Military hospital, and seen the poor fellows with tense muscles, twitching, jerking and groaning in their sleep, and realised how little rest to mind or body such sleep gave. It is a great thing to learn to relax even physically, and much more so to relax mentally and spiritually.

We may notice next that there is a moral and religious significance in dreams. Dreams are largely the hidden and symbolised expression of mental tendencies. Everyone finds that the mental and moral level is lower in dreams than in waking life. Was it the same Irishman we quoted just now, who said he dreamt of doing what he wouldn't dream of doing! We see in the mirror of dreams the lower side of our nature. Everyone knows the story of the man who, seeing a condemned criminal, said "There, but for the grace of God, go I." We might say the same of what we see in our dreams. They represent what, by the grace given to us, we have repressed.

A man once consulted me in genuine distress. He was a cashier and his firm's methods of book-keeping were not very strict. He knew it would be easy to defraud them. One night he dreamt he had done so, and in the dream felt no shame, but rather delight at the successful way of covering his defalcations which he dreamt he had discovered. On waking he was ashamed, and asked me if the dream indicated what he called a possible criminal streak in his nature. I told him that on the contrary it probably did credit to his honesty. As an honest man, when he saw opportunities of defrauding his firm he promptly dismissed the thought. What we repress by day, gets its outlet by night in dreams. It is a well-known fact that some of the cleanest-minded people swear in a surprising way under anæsthetics. That does not reflect on their character, rather the reverse. All hear bad language. To the pure-minded it is objectionable, and they repress it from memory. When the control of the mind is lost, under the anæsthetic, what is repressed comes out. Those to whom bad language is habitual may be less likely to use it when unconscious, although this statement must not be construed into a libel on those who happen to come round from an anæsthetic quietly!

Dreams then illustrate the sex repressions and other repressions of waking life. There is no reason to be afraid that we shall descend to

the level of our worst dreams. The fact that the lower moral side of human nature is shown in dreams indicates that it is repressed, and in check. Yet it is by no means a misfortune that we should see what we might be in the mirror they hold up to us. It is a reminder of the ideal set before us in Capt. Sorley's lines:

> "This sanctuary of my soul
> Unwitting I keep white and whole
> Unlatched and lit, if Thou should'st care
> To enter or to tarry there."

Dreams then when properly understood are an indication of character. It is sometimes said that we wittingly or unwittingly retouch our dreams, just as the photographer retouches the plate. The reason is that the memory of dreams fades very quickly, and unless we think out the dream when we wake it is lost. Indeed something is lost probably in every case, and hence we retouch to supply it, to make our disconnected memories consistent. Yet the same imagination that supplied the dream supplies the retouching, so that in any case the imagination is revealed.

The importance of the dream then, as an indication of the character of the mind that creates it, is that in dreams we tap the raw material, the unconscious, unrestrained by all that controls our waking thoughts. Freud speaks of the censor who controls us by day. By night the censor's vigilance relaxes and we experience

that which never gets a chance of expression in our normal life. In the dream then the underworld of our life is shown, and if we are wise we shall profit by the knowledge thus given.

One other meaning enters into sleep. It is the natural symbol for death, and waking for resurrection. Probably the fact of sleep, and the need to explain dreams, led primitive man to the belief, held universally at all stages of culture, in a double or soul. To primitive people it is the double or soul that undergoes the adventures of the dream, and death is the departure of the double, usually thought of under the guise of the breath. We still speak of death as the last sleep, and that is exactly what it is. Night after night we sleep, and the thought of losing consciousness in sleep has no terror for us, nor do we fear lest we should not wake. Yet every psychologist knows what a number of people are nervously afraid of death. In Biblical phrase through fear of death they are all their lifetime subject to bondage.

During the war, and at other times in my work, I have been with many at life's end, and my experience is wholly that which Sir William Osler, from a far greater experience, stated. He said that whereas he had seen a few die triumphantly, and a few in fear, the vast majority die as naturally and unconsciously as they were born. Death after all is not an unnatural thing. No natural experience is terrifying. Those of us who have experienced the agonies

of a severe illness, when we faced nightmares of delirium and struggled, it seemed, helplessly, should recollect that our travail was that of living, not dying. We pulled through, and it was a painful process struggling back to life. When the end of life comes at last, it will come naturally. The desire to live dies down like the sap in autumn, and the thread is broken as easily as the autumn leaf falls from the tree. Death is indeed just a final sleep, and the sleep that comes gently and naturally every night is a kindly rehearsal that makes us so used to losing consciousness that we can face the last sleep as if it were familiar. In sleep we prepare for the last experience of all. What then of waking? The night passes and the day breaks, the winter goes and the spring comes, and after the last sleep there is that last waking, when we wake in the light that does not fade. If sleep is a symbol of death, waking is a symbol of immortality, and just as the ancient graves are found with the sleeper set toward the East, so may we hope that from the last sleep we shall wake, looking to the Light Eternal.

CHAPTER XIV

CHARACTER AND ITS CONSTITUENTS: HOW WE ARE MADE AND UNMADE

We are to speak about character. What precisely do we mean by character? Like most words that have a mental or spiritual meaning, it also has a material meaning. The reason for that is because man invented names for concrete things before he learnt to recognise abstract things. Such words as spirit, subject, impression, are all used in both psychological and material senses. If we want to say a thing is important we call it " weighty " or " material." As Bergson graphically puts it, ours is a language of solids. The term character is another illustration. We still speak of printed characters. The actual word comes from the Greek, where it denotes either the engraving tool or what is engraved. If we borrow the metaphor, we may call will the engraving tool and character what is engraved. Will and character are really two aspects of the same thing. Character shows the will in action, it is what will engraves in habits, principles and precedents. Character is the permanent record of our wills, and the will is in a very true sense the self.

When Pope wrote that rather horrifying line "Most women have no characters at all," he referred to the alleged fickleness of their sex, which makes them veer quickly from one position to another. Without endorsing that libel, which is probably due to the slower-witted masculine mind being bewildered by the quick flashes of feminine intuition, we may recognise what it suggests, namely that character must have some permanent features in order to exist at all, otherwise it is like the British climate, whose only settled feature is that it is unsettled! The permanent elements of character are its habits and principles, and on these girders the superstructure of character rests.

One of the most difficult problems psychology has to face is that of multiple personality, and no really satisfactory explanation is forthcoming. We see a milder form of this in multiple character, the Jekyll and Hyde in some people's lives. A little while ago a much respected bank manager died, a man on whose integrity and judgment both customers and employers alike relied, and never relied in vain. Yet after his death, it was found that for years past that man had been a reckless gambler, employing another name, having an account in another bank for the purpose. Neither his wife nor his intimate friends ever suspected it, and so strict was he in his business life that he frowned upon a private sweepstake got up amongst the members of the staff of his bank. He left no papers,

no explanations. It was only by accident that the matter was discovered, and the mystery of why and wherefore remains unsolved.

Such cases are strong forms of what is common in thousands of cases. The bully is often a coward, the conceited man is often suffering from an inferiority complex that he tries to repress with a superiority complex and so gains a name for conceit. The hero is often at heart intensely timid. Character is seldom uniform in all its layers, and it is a fascinating question to ask which side of us is the true one.

> "Within my earthly temple there's a crowd:
> There's one of us that's humble, one that's proud:
> There's one that's broken-hearted for his sins,
> And one who unrepentant sits and grins:
> There's one who loves his neighbour as himself,
> And one who cares for nought but fame and pelf,
> From much corroding care I should be free,
> If once I could determine which is me!

Nowadays a very frequent distinction is made between extroverts and introverts as representing two types of character. The extrovert's mind turns outward. The world of things, machines, games, practical organisation, exploration, warfare, is his magnet. The introvert's mind looks within, and is occupied with itself. It inclines to wrestle with abstractions, to study its own working, to the mystical. Mary is the typical introvert, and Martha the typical extrovert.

"And the sons of Mary smile and are blessèd.
They know the angels are on their side.
They know in them is the grace confessèd, and for them are the Mercies multiplied.
They sit at the Feet—they hear the Word—they see how truly the Promise runs.
They have cast their burden upon the Lord, and—the Lord He lays it on Martha's sons!"

Yet probably no one is a pure introvert or a pure extrovert, and perhaps the best types of character are, if not fifty-fifty, sixty-forty. Which should be the sixty per cent. side is not for me to say, though I may confess a little personal sympathy for the practical virtues of the extrovert.

Can we help having certain characters? Yes. Can we help having certain temperaments? No. Temperament is the inborn influence. The Qurān says the scroll of a man's fate is hung round his neck at birth. Alter the word fate to temperament, and it is true, but temperament is not fate. Character is fate, but we make character. Temperament may possibly be largely influenced by those ductless glands of which we often hear nowadays, glands which discharge their secretions into the blood. But temperament does not make character.

Imagine a class of children modelling at school; but suppose that instead of giving them all the same materials, we give one clay, another a set of metal strips, another old matchboxes and corks, and tell all of them to build a house.

The result will vary considerably according to the materials, but the skill of each child will show itself whatever the materials. Now temperament represents the given material, and character represents the result. The result is expressed through the material, but it shows another factor, the child's skill, and similarly the use we make of our temperaments constitutes our character, and that use after all is what makes our personalities, not the temperament itself. Personality is a word easier to use than to define, but we might describe it as our essential "I-ness," or other people's "you-ness," and that is in every case unique. The Creator breaks His mould when He creates us, for no two are over alike. It is some comfort in a world that tends more and more to lose its picturesque national and local differences, and to become standardised, to know that we have something that can never be duplicated.

Personality is a growth. We start with many possibilities and no actualities. Rousseau's exclamation "Man is born free, but is everywhere in chains" is very far from the truth. We are born dominated by inborn instinct and impulse. Yet as Mazzini said "We are not free, but we are free to become free." The growth of our characters means the way in which we become free, and that growth is by means of an interplay between nature and nurture, the inborn inheritance and the outer

surroundings, with our own free will as a deciding factor.

This brings us to the subject of the influences that make character. The belief that the right environment or training will develop the right character is as old as Plato and older, but the fact remains that given the best possible training, some characters develop on anti-social lines. The fact may yet be that given the right training you will get the right character. The trouble is that what is the right training for John may not be right for James, but since John and James are brothers they will get the same training, and their parents will think it a matter of justice to treat them alike. Sometimes it is a sheer injustice. I know of a John and a James brought up in a strictly religious home, treated absolutely alike. John is a church official, and a good square thinking and square dealing man, not too fond of novelty, or too given to imagination, yet as upright a man as one can find. He ascribes his virtues to the home training. James is—well no one knows where, though the police would be interested to learn, but before his necessary disappearance James used to attribute his failings to the strict and unsympathetic upbringing he received. There are plenty of such cases, which do not disprove that the right training will make the right character, but show us that what is right for one may not be equally good for another.

That there are fundamental differences inborn in us is not to be ignored. The kennelman will tell you that some foxhounds turn out to be no good for pack purposes, and these are generally weeded out as spoiling the pack. Yet they may be litter brothers and sisters to some of the best hounds. If there are such differences in puppies, it would be strange if the far greater and far more complex characteristics of mankind did not show variations. The trouble is to find the right system of character building for each individual. Prof. Spearman in his book on the measurement of ability has said that everyone is a genius at something and a dunce at something else. The difficulty lies in ascertaining what things, and usually we find out our inabilities first. Yet take for example this. A public school boy, son of a successful business man, proved a complete failure in business, tried to be a motor-engineer, a salesman, a commercial traveller, and at last was sent out to Australia by his exasperated family. There he finally got work on a sheep run and proved a perfect genius with sheep. Now he is a prosperous and respected man.

Can psychology help us to avoid such misfits in education? At present it is only a young science, and yet the scope for it is enormous. Here is a case in point. A well-educated man of good family has a mania for old prints, and has twice been put in prison for stealing them. He is not dishonest in other respects, and he

does not sell the prints he steals. Rather does he gloat over them as a miser over gold. As soon as he was released from prison after his first sentence, he resumed his visits to the art shops and his pilfering, and once more found his way to prison again, and seems likely to go there off and on for the rest of his life. Yet what is the use of imprisonment in such a case? Will it deter him, reform him, deter others, or whatever else punishment is supposed to do? A little applied psychology might readily get to the bottom of the mental kink in such a character and save the man. Probably if he could have been made a curator in a museum or picture gallery he would have been a happy and honest man. We deal out a stock size training of an excellent type, and then we blame the outsize souls because they do not fit in with it. The training is good enough, it is the lack of psychological discrimination in applying it that causes many of the failures!

A further and important point with regard to character-building is what one may call the secondary growth. In many respects this is the real test. We often hear of those who have been spoilt by success. Up to the time of their success they were pleasing personalities. Then, as we say, their heads were turned, and it often happens on this account that a man goes so far and no further. With success he loses the qualities that brought it, or develops others

which check it. Similarly some men are made, others broken, by failure.

This secondary growth, the result of our first results, is none the less often due to factors which were all the while within the nature concerned. When anyone is seeking to obtain their goal their attitude is psychologically different from what it is when they have obtained. In the earlier stages impulses are held in check, feelings repressed, because they conflict with the goal. Once that goal is gained, there is no longer need to check them, and they express themselves, often to the detriment of the personality. That is why the first results, whether they be success or failure, are never final. The secondary growth that is based on them brings out the repressed side of character, or expresses a fresh side.

We pass on to speak of the relation between character and influence. What we call influence is the suggestion which every character, whether deliberately or not, expresses. Suggestion is the psychological term, influence the religious equivalent, though the actual word influence has an ancient astrological flavour, and meant originally the inflow from the stars, which was thought to direct man's destiny. Influence is an excellent example of the law we learnt in school-days, that to every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. It is never one-sided. Even when the stronger character so dominates the weaker that we are ready to excuse the weaker

as a mere tool, the very fact that he found his tool so subservient, influences the stronger partner, and is indicated probably in his dealings with the next similar person he meets.

But characters do not only influence each other. There is self-influence, or, if you like, auto-suggestion. The character we have is not the only thing. There is the character we think we have. Every reader of *Pickwick* recollects how seriously Mr. Winkle persuaded himself he was a sportsman, and how in order to sustain that rôle in the eyes of his friends, he landed himself into a duel with the redoubtable Dr. Slammer, and into strange adventures in riding, shooting and skating. Seriously however, our imagined character, though it be but a projection of our own minds, is a kind of draughtsman's plans of our future development. "Know thyself," said the Greeks, and we might add "Believe in yourself." That is not conceit. Conceit boasts before it achieves. To believe in one's self is quietly to set before our minds the ideal of what we should be. The man who knows himself knows his own possibilities, and if he believes in himself he will realise them. Confidence is said to be essential to business success. It is not less essential to the development of personality. The making of character results from the blending of expression and repression. Every cricketer knows that the best batsmen are those who mix patience and quick decision. With patience they wait for the right

ball to hit, and when it comes, hit with decision. They take their risks, but they halve them by the fact that they are never in two minds, for indecision is the first step on the way back to the pavilion. The analogy with character building is close. Character building involves that measure of control over instinct and impulse, temper, hastiness, rashness, caution, timidity and sometimes even prudence, without which we never attain to any force of personality.

As a teacher, I do not in the least undervalue knowledge as a factor in character, but what you know is not you. It is obtained primarily from others. It is second-hand, and apart from what you are yourself, mere knowledge makes only a second-hand personality. It is what you bring to the knowledge that is brought to you that counts. The actual knowledge, possessed shall we say by Shakespeare or by Darwin, was no more, probably less than that possessed by thousands of their contemporaries. It was what they themselves brought to their knowledge that made them famous, and it was, in Carlyle's famous phrase, the transcendent capacity for taking pains. Some well-educated people are quite unimpressive. They are merely the echo of the opinions of their universities or teachers, but the men of high moral integrity even when they are illiterate always impress their personalities upon us.

One is sometimes asked why it is that evil characters are so powerful, why are some veritable

fiends fascinating, and vicious men brilliant. The answer I think is that no character is attractive in its evil aspect, but the worst are never one hundred per cent. bad. Fiction often makes its characters haloed heroes or sordid sinners. Life shows us that none is good save one and that is God, and that none is irredeemably evil. After all, we believe man was made by God, and God is the freeholder of our character. We build upon what He leases to us, and although we have power to build well or ill, and to tenant our building with what we will, none of us can sublet the whole of our character to evil. What attracts us in evil personalities is not their evil. It is rather those powers which are brilliant, those gifts which mark out strength of mind and quickness of decision. That such gifts have been debased is the tragedy, but the gifts themselves are not wrong, and we may admire them whilst condemning the way in which they are employed. An evil character certainly has an evil influence, but what makes that influence powerful is the man's abilities not his badness.

Even the most careless must be sobered by the thought, if ever it comes to them, of the responsibilities of influence. Yet here we often make a huge mistake. Anxious to exercise a right influence, we consciously try to do so, and the result is—what we ourselves feel when some excellent person tries to influence us aright and that is "Positively wicked." That is what

psychologists call contra-suggestion, and nothing provokes it more than well meaning attempts to exercise a good influence. Influence is one of the very very few things that improves by neglect. Leave it alone, and it will work. Try to exercise it and it will prove a boomerang. Every character expresses its influence for good or bad and to those round about, yes and far further than we ever know. It is as inescapable as the scent of the lavender fields,—or, as the odours of the tanyard! "Character tells," we say, it tells its own story inevitably and the world is better or worse for the telling. May we not then say with Rabbi Ben Ezra?

"Then take and use thy work
Amend what flaws may lurk
What strain o' the stuff what warpings past the aim
My times be in thy hand!
Perfect the cup as planned!
Let age approve of youth, and death complete the same."

CHAPTER XV

CONSCIENCE AND CONFLICT: THE INNER STORY OF TEMPTATION

THINK of three circles one inside the other. The smallest and innermost is consciousness, what we are immediately thinking. Beyond that, is a wider area, we should not call it a circle strictly, because that suggests definite boundaries, and this area is very indefinitely bounded. It consists of the subconscious side of our mind, the part which is not before us at the moment, but may pass into our mind's full attention at any instant, and at its further edge lies that remoter side which seldom comes to notice. Beyond this, an indefinite circle or area shades off into the third region, that of the unconscious, which belongs to our mind and yet is the unexplored territory which we do not and cannot directly know. Indeed its existence is inferred, just as astronomers have inferred the existence of a new planet, from the disturbances it creates in the spheres we do know. We have no reasonable doubt of its presence, even though one is a little suspicious of the familiarity certain psychologists seem somehow to have attained with its functions.

Let us think now of what happens when some mental conflict arises. At such times as it is not directly before us, it is, as we say, "on our mind," and keeps on asserting itself from the subconscious mind. But mental conflicts, like disease, have an acute stage, and then subside. If the disease is not conquered, it may be subdued, and yet remain quiescent, now and again perhaps giving us an unwelcome reminder that it has not vanished altogether. Similarly the wound heals, but leaves a scar. Now a mental conflict of the painful type is just as much an injury to the mind as the disease or wound is to the body. If it is not settled, the acute stage passes, but the effects remain.

Perhaps it is forgotten after a while. But if by forgotten one means "lost," let us say at once that there is no evidence that anything is utterly lost. It remains in the recesses of the subconscious, perhaps in the unconscious mind. Yet this buried conflict has not healed up, and may prove like an abscess within the body which is a poison to our system. The mental abscess similarly can be said to poison the mind, and to that cause thousands of cases of mental breakdown are due.

Some may say "I have no unresolved conflicts," no "complexes," for an unresolved conflict sets up a complex in most cases. Yet as Dr. W. H. R. Rivers put it "childhood is one long conflict between individual instinctive tendencies, and the social traditions and ideals

of society." Not only so, but the tendency to experience conflicts follows us through life. From home, the child passes to school, where very often the home training and traditions clash with the school standards. From there he passes on to the university or to work, and there meets the full force of the temptations of life for the first time. If such a lad has been brought up in a religious home, the conflict is often a very sharp one, and the point is that whilst he can appreciate it outwardly, he cannot gauge it inwardly. He knows quite well for example that the ways of the set to which he has been introduced are not those of home, and that he has argued out the matter, perhaps hotly with these fellows, or perhaps with his folk at home. What he cannot fully gauge is the influence that this clash is having upon the working of his own mind unconsciously.

It is not merely the lad who has been strictly brought up who meets with such a conflict. Lately I met a charming and intelligent girl student whose parents were strong agnostics. She had been brought up to regard all religion as superstition. Now at college, she is finding herself keenly interested in religion, and confessed to sitting up late with her fellow-students many a night arguing upon it, and what is more, to visits to churches, and to hear speakers. Her parents are somewhat grieved at what appears to them a regrettable disregard of her soundly scientific upbringing. She has her

conflict just as much as those whose upbringing has been religious.

Another great cause of conflict is sex repression. One cannot enter into details upon such a subject in a talk like this, but a few things should be plainly set forth. The first thing to recognise is the normal natural power of the sex impulses in both sexes, and the fact that this power begins to manifest itself before, some think long before, puberty. In its place such an impulse is a pure and right thing. It is the creative impulse, and comes from our Creator who is the source of life. All who transmit life are acting as His instruments, to hand on what He gives. Not only so, but in its sublimated forms some of the highest human activities are energised by it. In the present day we are growing more frank, but the older ones will realise how in their day they grew up with the notice that there was something disgraceful about feeling any such impulse, and that it should not be owned or admitted before one's seniors.

The impulse is too strong to be ignored. The interest it arouses is far too vital to be set aside. Consequently the tendency amongst school-children has been to talk ignorantly and mischievously amongst themselves and to affect innocence before their seniors, with the result that a conflict and repression upon this topic grow up before even its full strength is met in adolescence. Then when adolescence comes, the conflict becomes intense, and how many

mental shipwrecks have been made upon this rock, God only knows. There are few more clamant needs than that of facing up to the importance of the sex factor in mental life, and adjusting it rightly, and not merely the physical side, but its mental accompaniments.

In the case of many of our conflicts we are well aware of what is happening. But even so, the tendency to repress the unpleasant helps to drive some part from consciousness, and in the unconscious this may set up some disturbance that makes us unhappy or perhaps leads us to act in some inexplicable manner. A few years ago, I was consulted by a young minister who told me he had no place in the ministry, since he knew that at heart he didn't believe a word he said, and that when people thanked him for the help they received from his sermons, he laughed inwardly to think they should be so foolish as to be so readily duped. I did not accept his statements at face value, knowing the man and thinking better of him than he thought of himself. But it was clear that there was an unresolved conflict, possibly an unconscious one, going on within.

After some while, a chat about his dreams, which, because they show the free working of the imagination, are the hunting ground of the psychologist seeking for clues, gave me a hint. His dreams continually showed him in situations where he had much at stake and always lost, or reverted to his schooldays. I discovered that

as a boy he had come from the country to a city school, where his country words and ways made him a laughing-stock. He had felt this intensely, and as a defence mechanism had adopted a devil-may-care attitude. On leaving school he entered the army, and had done well there, and had no special trouble. After the war he entered the ministry. Then the old nervousness and fear of criticism came back, and because he cared so intensely about succeeding, and was truly anxious to do good, he tortured himself with the imagination that he was a failure, and unconsciously adopted the old schooldays' attitude of "don't care" as a defence against his over anxiety. This he interpreted as cynicism. He was greatly relieved at the explanation, though at first rather incredulous. But by suggestion, he was persuaded to accept it, and now is doing well, and has lost all his old haunting fears. That is a case of a conflict of which the person concerned was certainly conscious, and yet the roots from which its peculiar characteristics were derived, were unconscious.

The help psychology can give in such cases is in tracing out the root of the trouble. We all realise that we don't know enough about the working of our bodies to doctor ourselves. We go to a medical man. We do not know enough about the working of our own minds to cure our conflicts, but unhappily we think we do, or else that the matter is not important.

We are still such materialists as to think that all illness is primarily physical. Even the medical man when he is sick or when his family are, calls in a colleague as a rule, because he knows that others will see in him or in them, what he from the "close-up" position may fail to see. The analogy holds good as regards the mind. We cannot see ourselves as others see us, least of all as the psychologist sees us.

What is the cure? It is like the treatment we give to the abscess. The swelling must be opened up and its contents drained away. That gives Nature her chance to clean up what remains. The unresolved conflict sets up a complex, a cluster of sentiments and impulses isolated and often unwholesome. To open it out, cleanses it, and the mind itself completes the cure.

It is believed by many psychologists that forgetting is an active process, and that what is unpleasant is actively repressed, and there are a number of instances told of people forgetting, quite honestly and not deliberately, unpleasant appointments and so forth. I cannot say that is my experience. I almost wish it were, for I recollect them only too well. Yet to a certain extent we can forget at will. Here for example is a person who has injured us rather shabbily. We should like to forgive and forget, but whilst we may forgive, we cannot forget. Yet still we can recall as we will.

We can recall the incident and let all our emotions, anger, indignation and so forth flame out again, or we can recall it dispassionately. We may have little control over our emotions at the moment of injury, but we have a great deal of control over emotions that are stimulated by recall. Resolve to think of the matter without emotion and to all intents and purposes it is forgotten, for it will not prejudice any future action, and the past that has no mortgage on the future is a mere past and no more. That is one way of solving a mental conflict in recall, by robbing it of that emotional colouring that so heightens it.

Some conflicts can be solved by side-tracking them rather than by direct attack. Some of the burning political issues on which one generation fights fiercely, die out, not because either side wins, but because new issues arise which thrust the old controversy into obscurity, and it is forgotten. It is not otherwise with mental conflicts. They are sublimated either unconsciously or wittingly, though the former is generally the more satisfactory way. But we must not assume that a well-balanced peaceful mind is the goal of our existence. The world's greatest men have experienced continual mental conflict, and the very struggles of their mind have called into being, or at any rate released those energies which issue in great achievements in art, science and invention. A living religious experience is far more often

gained through mental conflict than by mental calm. Whilst we have been speaking of the evils that may arise through conflict within, we must not forget the good. In a very true sense dissatisfaction is the spur to progress; hunger creates appetite, doubt stimulates the search for truth, and mental conflict is the travail out of which new creation comes.

On the other side we find our topic connects with temptation and conscience, moral conflict that is to say. In our schooldays we were familiar with the inquiring voice of authority asking, "So and So, what are you doing?" The answer was invariably, "Nothing, Sir." I hope it was true, yet in a sense it was never true How can you *do* nothing? We never do nothing, we are never occupied with nothing except when we are asleep or unconscious. We are always seekers, bent on doing or thinking about something. That something is always a good. We never seek bad as bad. Milton's Satan says, "Evil be Thou my Good." Even he does not want bad as bad. Our inborn impulses and instincts keep our minds on the move like a stream, even though some minds are like mountain torrents and others like the sluggish streams of the plains. Nevertheless they move.

No instinct is bad. We say that an animal is not to be blamed for following its instincts, which is often an excuse for our cat! I suppose it is so, though one wishes cats had different

instincts! The animal is not to be blamed, because its instincts lead in one way, and it cannot help following them. We cannot help following our instincts, but we have more than one way of following. Centuries of experience, of religious and moral teaching, have more or less clearly marked out those ways as right and wrong. Conscience is the sense of the agreement or disagreement of our actions with our standards of right and wrong. Temptation is not psychologically different from any mental choice. It is an act of deliberation, putting forth pros and cons in the same way as we do when we deliberate over any course of action. It is conscience which makes the difference between neutral deliberation and temptation. The essence of temptation is choosing the wrong path to the right goal. The thief follows his acquisitive instincts. There is nothing wrong in getting things. We condemn the thief for the way he gets them.

We all recollect the old joke of the mother saying, " See what Johnny is doing, and tell him he mustn't." The earliest moral laws are negative: " Thou shalt not kill," steal, covet, and so on. Yet that is trying to dam up the stream. The most practical means of meeting a temptation is to substitute another type of action. It matters comparatively little what. To the words watch and pray, the psychologist will add " work." The man who is struggling with a temptation to impurity may not find it enough

to resolve not to indulge. But if he promptly gets down hard to work or play, the energy which is strengthening the temptation will expend itself in that way, and the mind will turn from the subject. There is a law of conservation of mental energy. We cannot destroy it, but we can control its direction.

A further suggestion from psychology is this. Get the right channels for mental energy. Very few people are deliberately wicked, but many have no special principles of action, in other words channels, and their mental energies spill over, to make a sad mess of their lives. The words principle has rather a rigid sound, yet if we speak of the principles of mathematics or engineering we do not imagine we are referring to arbitrary restrictive rules, but rather with certain fundamental laws of the universe which we discover. We can interpret moral principles similarly. They are the rules which the experience of mankind has discovered, the laws which govern social life, not the prosy maxims of moralists. No life can disregard those principles and keep on the right lines.

In one sense moral laws or principles limit our actions, and yet by doing so they give us a truer freedom. The citizen living under law is more truly free than the brigand who acknowledges no law. The right to self determination cannot be given, it must be won, and just as the artist must learn the principles of his art

in order to express his personality in it, so moral personality comes through moral principles. Some unprincipled people are attractive by reason of their unconventionality, but they are as undependable as a tame tiger. They may turn on us at any time. Few deliberately choose to do wrong. Far more do so simply because they have no principles to act as channels through which the flood waters of temptation are carried away. It is impossible to control every separate impulse. We must look to our moral habits as the chief safeguard against temptation.

Our standpoint here is that of psychology rather than of morals, but it is a sound psychological maxim to suggest that temptations should be dealt with promptly. The essence of deliberation is imagination. We project ourselves mentally into each of the alternatives and so explore its possibilities. To imagine ourselves indulging in any course of action is the first step to doing so, for imagination has issues always that run outwards towards life. On the other hand mere repression of the temptation tends towards setting up an unconscious conflict. It is far better to turn the mind's energies in another direction than to assist our temptations by giving them a mental rehearsal, or to set up some inner conflict by trying to repress them. I do not suggest that all repression sets up mental conflict. All of us are constantly being infected by germs, but

the body conquers most of these enemies for us, and the mind similarly can settle many of the conflicts that attack it, without our experiencing harm. But in some cases both mind and body fail to destroy their foes, and then the trouble begins. Yet to carry the analogy a step further, it is by meeting and overcoming the disease germ that our system gains immunity, and morally too we should remember that innocence means being unharmed, not being ignorant. The character baptised by the fires of temptation may be of more use to God and man than the character whose moral fibres have never been hardened in those fires, or hammered on the anvil of conflict, for as the Scriptures put it "He that overcometh shall inherit all things."

CHAPTER XVI

SUNSHINE AND SHADOW: THE ROOTS OF FEAR AND JOY

If I heard a man say he never felt fear, I should not believe him. If it were true, I should not admire him. Aristotle said that a man "would deserve to be called insane or insensible if there were nothing that he feared, not even an earthquake or a storm at sea, as is said to be the case with the Celts," and whilst one need not agree that these particular examples of fearsome things are specially to be feared, one can join with Aristotle in regarding the man who feels no fear at all as far from being a hero on that account. Fear is instinctive, and anyone who lacks, or is supposed to lack, the great human instincts is somewhat less, not more, than human.

Fear has its uses. The utterly fearless animal would not have a long innings in that keen contest called the struggle for existence, since fear can add speed to the flight of the pursued, and caution to the actions of the hunted creature. Even where fear paralyses action, it does not necessarily follow that it is disastrous, because immobility is often the best protection, as in

the case of the small bird which "freezes" motionless when it sees the hawk, and by that means escapes notice. Even at the worst, fear is nature's anæsthetic. I once rescued a young blackbird from a cat. It was entirely uninjured, but paralysed with fear. It lay inert in my hand, and when placed on its feet, fell. It seemed to have no feeling whatever. After a while it recovered and flew away, but its fear seemed temporarily to have deprived it of feeling. Fear may thus be a kindly anæsthetic before death.

At the same time we readily can exaggerate the amount of fear in nature. There is no evidence that any wild creatures have an inborn fear of man. Such fear is quickly acquired, of course, and unfortunately with good reason. Yet the idea of nature as "a dismal cockpit," a hell of fear for its panic-stricken creatures, is ludicrously false. If you would be convinced, go and lie quietly one sunny afternoon near a rabbit warren. Few creatures have more enemies than Bunny—foxes, badgers, dogs, cats, stoats, weasels, ferrets, keepers, traps and guns, to say nothing of air raids from eagles and owls. Yet the rabbits come out into the open, run, skip, jump over each other, sit up to wash their faces and brush their whiskers, nibble the grass, the jolliest little creatures imaginable. If you move, some old buck stamps a warning foot and the rabbits run, but then only a few yards, to look back and see if it is a false alarm. No,

the wild creature feels fear only in the moment of actual danger. It feels fear, but it does not think fear. We do.

We fear the past, the shadows of past mistakes or losses. There are pages that we would like to tear out of the book of our remembrance, pages stained and tear-blotted. If only we could burn them in the fire of oblivion! But the moving finger has written and moves on. What has been done is never done with. Its ghost may yet rise to haunt the echoing corridors of memory. We fear the present, the uncertainty of life. Sometimes, like the shadow thrown on the sundial, our brightest hours are shaded by foreboding that such happiness is too precious to last, and joy brings its fears as the thorns of its roses. But the worst fears are of the future. We can measure the causes in the past that may still threaten us. We are face to face with the present and can do something to grapple with an immediate danger; but in the mist that shrouds the future from our eyes the spectres of our fears loom like giants. It is for these reasons that human fear is worse than animals' fear.

An animal's fear does not seem unnatural or out of place, but when fear lays its hand on us, very often we feel ashamed of ourselves. As Kipling graphically puts it:

"Very softly down the glade runs a waiting, watching shade,
And the whisper spreads that widens far and near.

And the sweat is on thy brow, for he passes even now—
He is Fear, O Little Hunter, he is Fear!
Ere the moon has climbed the mountain, ere the rocks
are ribbed with light,
When the downward-dipping trails are dank and drear,
Comes a breathing hard behind thee—*snuffle snuffle*
through the night—
It is Fear, O Little Hunter, it is Fear!
But thy hands are loosed and weak, and the blood has
left thy cheek . . . .
It is fear, O Little Hunter, it is fear.
But thy throat is shut and dried, and thy heart against
thy side
Hammers: Fear, O Little Hunter—this is Fear!"

There may be something pathetic and dignified in sorrow. There can even be a noble rage. But fear is the most ignoble of our emotions, and humanity is seen at its least and lowest in its terrors. Even in its compounds, fear is ugly. Hatred, which is the most horrible of sentiments, is a compound of anger and fear. Yet we feel fear and are meant to feel it. It has its uses. How then are we to distinguish between the right and the wrong place of fear in life? We shall find the answer to that question by seeing the difference between feeling fear, which is natural, and thinking fear, which is not. Fear is a quick, hot emotion. When we think fear, we meet the slower colder form we call worry or anxiety, which we might describe as the solidified form of fear, and the greatest killjoy there is.

If we make a psychological study of anxiety, we shall find it highly suggestive. Let us

first recollect that psychology has shown us that primarily our minds exist for living rather than for thinking. Primitive man was not much of a thinker in the abstract, but he used his slowly-developing brain power to fight against the great wild beasts that preyed upon him, and gradually the cave-bear and the sabre-toothed tiger and his other fearsome foes, far stronger than he, were beaten in the struggle by their feeble adversary's superior brain power. Mind was given for action and still bears strongly its original characteristics.

Now the essence of anxiety is indecision. It arises either because we do not know how to act; or more commonly because we try to act too soon. Anxiety means that our minds are trying to solve the situation before it arises, trying to solve mentally what must be solved later in action. We cannot realise the profound truth of the words that the morrow will take thought for its own problems when they come, and that sufficient to each day are its peculiar difficulties, without adding to it a premature and useless rehearsal of to-morrow's troubles.

Anxiety is quite different from forethought. Forethought is cool and deliberate preparation at the right time; anxiety is trying to do now what can only be done then. Forethought makes us better prepared to meet the situation; anxiety makes us worse prepared. Like the nervous colt that frets itself into a lather of

sweat before it starts to race, we waste the energies in anxiety that will soon be needed to face the actual crisis. There is no need to recite the black list of stupidities, cruelties, blunders, which are due to worry, and to nothing but worry.

The invariable excuse we make for our folly in giving way to anxiety is that it is our inborn disposition, and that we cannot help it. It may be admitted certainly that some temperaments are much more prone to anxiety than others. But so are some to selfishness and bad temper. We blame the selfish and bad-tempered if they do not control themselves. That we do not equally blame those who are of an anxious disposition is simply because anxiety, being a more private and inward thing, has not such manifestly undesirable results as selfishness or bad temper. Yet indirectly its results are often as bad, and if one type of disposition can be kept under control, so can another.

Those who are given to fretting, worry or anxiety usually forget that all these things are due to a state of mind, and imagine they are due to certain particular causes, to certain troubles. We have all met the gentleman who desires a trifling loan, and assures us that all his embarrassment is due to lack of this ridiculously small sum, and that, once granted it, he will be as free as a skylark and start work on that job promised him to-morrow, and be happy ever

after! Most of us have paid enough to that sort of person to have learnt that if they had £100 given to them on the spot, they would be back on our doorsteps in a week or so. They are not unlike the anxious in this respect, however, that they attribute a chronic condition to various temporary causes. The anxious "rationalise," as the psychologists say, by attributing their fears to this and that, when the truth is that they have a cause inside, and only an outlet outside.

The term used in psychology for this state is "anxiety neurosis"; that means a state of nerves, or nervous condition, set up within. What happens is this. Anxiety is the result of trying to act before the time comes. This premature fretting stirs up energies which should issue in action, but as the time has not come for action, it is necessary to repress them. Anxiety therefore always involves repression. What is repressed is thrust aside into the subconscious mind and filters through to the unconscious. Meanwhile we fix upon this or that as the cause of our anxiety. It is generally true that the cause we give is something which has unpleasant possibilities, but what we fail to see is that this does not account to anything like the full extent for our anxiety. It may give us cause for apprehension, but anxiety is due to a neurosis, a state of nerves within, not to any object without. We not infrequently hear of what seem pathetically needless suicides,

of people, who, through fear of possible blindness or financial loss, end their lives when all the evidence shows that such happenings were not at all probable. The victims believed that their troubles drove them to despair. What actually did the harm was an inner state of mind.

Many have been the remedies adopted as a cure for fears and anxieties. Pessimism is one odd defence mechanism. It is not natural, for surely there never was born a really pessimistic child. We start life optimistically, meet with disappointments, and resolve not to hope in future, so as not to be disappointed, to expect the worst, and so to get no worse than we expect. This deliberately adopted policy seldom succeeds even in doing what it is intended to do, and as it destroys one of the keenest joys of life, namely, anticipation, it is a remedy far worse than the disease.

Others, like the Epicureans of old, eat, drink and are merry and try by artificial excitement to stave off anxiety, which is like borrowing money to pay interest on borrowed money. It merely postpones and by doing so aggravates the settlement. Others, like the Stoics, try to cultivate an impassivity that shall render them immune from anxiety, a course that is usually a futile sham, or else produces that kind of optimist who thinks everything is for the best so long as it doesn't happen to him! If none of these devices really help, where can we find

a cure? Can psychology do anything to assist us?

We have seen the psychological analysis of anxiety, but it is hardly within the power of psychology to cure our worries, although its analysis may help by showing us something of their nature. Spinoza, that lonely thinker whose intellect was as clear and as hard as a diamond, said that "an emotion which is a passion, ceases to be a passion as soon as we form a clear and distinct idea of it." That may be so, but emotions raise heat that by no means helps to clear and distinct ideas. By giving a clear and distinct idea of the nature of anxiety, psychology should help to rid us of it, but does it?

If you have ever been seated round the fire at Christmas and heard some really good thrilling yarns about ghosts, told in the darkness, you may confess that, as you went upstairs to bed, and heard a moaning sound perhaps, you stoutly assured yourself it was the wind and that you believed in no nonsense about ghosts, and yet will you lay your hand on your heart and declare you were exactly and truthfully as unconcerned as an oyster? Fear is hot emotion, and even if the cooling jets of reason reduce its flames to embers, they still smoulder. To a certain extent, men can reason themselves from their fears. Our science has delivered us from many bogies, and yet it remains that, more than anything else, man has found in religion

the answer that has helped him to face his fears.

It is a common mistake to regard primitive religions especially, and the higher religious partly, as the outcrop of fear. Of course there is a strong element of fear in primitive faiths. Yet it is only in so far as he conquers his fears of the unseen spirit world, that man tries to get into touch with it. We fear infection and show our fear by keeping away from it. In the same way man would fly from his gods if fear were the only motive. Those who believe in devils keep away from them at all costs; those who believe in God approach him. It is far nearer the truth to say that even primitive religions represent the conquest, or at least the checking of fear, and not its outcome. The message of all religious faiths is "Be of good cheer." There are plenty of fears connected with religious beliefs, but there are far more cast out by them.

The soundest and sanest prescription against anxiety that I know is one which mixes religion and psychology. It is found in the words of St. Paul, "In nothing be anxious, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." It is an excellent bit of psychology. In nothing be anxious, it begins, but it does not stop at that, as the well-meant, but futile advice "Don't worry" does. Nor does it fall into another frequent mistake, of sympathising with

the victim of an anxiety neurosis. Kindly and welcome though such sympathy is, its general effect is to reassure the sufferer that his is indeed a hard case, and to confirm his opinion that he has every reason and excuse for anxiety. St. Paul's advice is far more sound. To tell the sufferer to forget or ignore the trouble, overlooks the fact that the effects of mental repression must be released. Just as an old illness or wound, long since past, may set up mischief in the system, so a trouble that has set up an anxiety neurosis becomes in itself a minor affair, and whilst we sympathise with the sufferer upon his trouble, the real harm is being done by the state of mind or nerves the trouble sets up, not the trouble itself.

The psychological method is to release the repression. The patient gets in touch with the analyst who seeks to do this. In St. Paul's prescription God takes the place of the analyst. It is part of the instinct of appeal, the instinct that makes the animal cry out to its fellows in pain or danger, that urges us to talk of our anxieties. St. Paul tells us to take the matter to God, and go through it with Him "re-synthesising," as psychologists say, the original experience.

"By prayer and supplication with thanksgiving." There is a twofold psychological truth here. First of all to give thanks creates, by suggestion, an atmosphere that is inimical to anxiety. It recalls causes for gratitude and

confidence, and reminds us of past anxieties overcome. All this goes towards making us better able to face the present situation in a hopeful spirit, which is the antithesis of anxiety. Secondly, it illustrates what the German educationist Herbart pointed out, that contrary states of mind expel one another. It is impossible to be angry and to laugh heartily at the same time, and equally impossible to be anxious with a heart full of thanksgiving. The remedy is one of displacement, expelling anxiety by a contrary state of mind.

No psychologist in the world can offer any sounder treatment than this. In a recent book written by an author who is anything but an apologist for Christianity, this occurs: "For the first time in history there is coming to maturity a generation of men and women who have no religion, and feel no need for one. They are content to ignore it. Also they are very unhappy and the suicide rate is abnormally high." Without necessarily subscribing to that statement, one must be struck by its significance. We are living in an age that has speeded up material development in every way, an age that is apt to confuse excitement with pleasure, an age that seems to try to do thrice as much in the three-score and ten years which still remain a measure of lifetime, as any former age did. The penalty is nervous strain and nervous breakdown. As the day so is not the strength. The consulting psychologists get more and more

patients, the casualties of the age in which we live. Overstrain and under-rest combine to produce fears, phobias, anxiety neuroses and breakdowns. Psychological treatment is at best but a palliative; it does not claim to be a preventive.

There is only one remedy that is proving really effective, and that is religion. As a minister of religion, my own opinion may be thought biased. I will quote, therefore, from a distinguished medical psychologist, Dr. William Brown, Wilde Reader in Mental Philosophy at the University of Oxford, and Psychotherapist to King's College Hospital. Dr. Brown points out that psychoanalytic treatment has the effect of dispelling complexes and mental illusions, and that therefore if religion were a mere projection of one's own imagination, analysis should leave the patient less religious than before. For scientific purposes, he submitted himself to analysis by a leading psychoanalyst for ninety-two hours, and found that his religious convictions were stronger for it, and that it had a purifying effect on his religious feelings, freeing them from merely sentimental and accidental accompaniments. To quote his actual words, "The ultimate result has been that I have become more convinced than ever that religion is the most important thing in life, and that it is essential to mental health." That is a notable expression of opinion regarding the psychological importance of religion. Mental health, the joy

of living, the destruction of fears and anxieties are found by thousands in a life based upon faith in the goodness and love of God; and where else in this age of stress and strain are true joys to be found?

CHAPTER XVII

FAITH AND WORSHIP: THE APPROACH TO THE HOLY

WHAT exactly is faith? It is worth while trying to get a clear idea in our minds, even though precise explanations are apt to be tedious, because faith is one of those words which we use rightly or wrongly with a fine impartiality. For example, we constantly contrast faith with knowledge, as if they were two separate states of mind, as distinct as light and dark:

> "We have but faith: we cannot know;
> For knowledge is of things we see;
> And yet we trust it comes from Thee,
> A beam in darkness: Let it grow."

All the same, if there were no faith, there certainly could be no knowledge, for faith is not something separate from knowledge, but something essential to it. In the first place, faith gives the *foundation* of knowledge. How do we know that we know? How can we be sure that any of our knowledge is ultimately true? The only answer we can give is to reply "By faith." No one can prove reason to be trustworthy by a process of reasoning. That would be an obvious circle of argument. Reason's reliability

must be, and is, accepted in faith. Then again, every *advance in knowledge* starts as a venture of faith. What but faith sent Drake round the Horn, or Columbus westward? Our very broadcasting is the triumph of the faith of the pioneers of the wireless world in the possibilities of the strange new phenomena they were exploring. They believed in those possibilities, and that belief made them actualities. Every farmer sows in faith, every business-man trades in faith, we plan our holidays ahead in faith,—faith in the stability of the universe, the regularity of its laws, the constancy of the main features of life, and so on. Faith then, so far from being something different from knowledge, is something essential to the existence and progress of knowledge.

Faith, therefore, is not something peculiar to religion. Rather is it a general attitude or temper that enters into the whole of our life. But of course there is a difference between, shall we say, the faith of the farmer who relies on the harvest, and the faith of the religious man in God. What precisely is it? The difference is not in the faith. All sorts of faith are alike psychologically. The difference lies in the amount of confirmation faith receives. After all there has been some sort of harvest, good or bad, every year, but does religious faith get such regular confirmation?

On this question, of course, the sceptic and the religious man differ. The sceptic has little

or no faith in the spiritual world, and so he gets little or no confirmation. He thinks the religious man credulous and foolish to believe what he does. But then he does not realise the amount of confirmation that comes to the believer. It does not come to him, and it cannot very well be explained to him. But is that a reason for denying it? Suppose we have a friend who has a wonderful business sense. His judgment seems to show him unerringly when to buy and when to sell. He cannot explain to us why it is so. Press him, and he says he just *feels* that is the thing to do. It is an intuition, not a reasoned conviction he can explain. Yet if his intuitions come right again and again, it is useless for us to deride them, though we have not any such intuitions ourselves. The religious man can seldom explain the intuitions of his faith. To others they seem credulity. Yet if they work they justify themselves. Someone may say our analogy fails because the business-man can prove that his intuitions are right by facts, and the religious man cannot. But does the objector realise what that means? Religion has existed much farther back than history can trace. It is universal. There is not, and never has been, so far as we know, any race without religion. The world's greatest intellects, Socrates and Plato, Shakespeare and Dante, Newton and Kant, have made no secret of their religious faith. Judged by quantity, religious faith is world wide; judged by quality,

the greatest men who ever lived have been men of religious beliefs. It is absurd to suggest that religious faith does not bring its own confirmation. Some of us who, unluckily, have very little capacity for art or music, cannot understand what art and music mean to others, but we don't doubt for a moment that they find in those spheres, depths which we cannot penetrate. The reality to which art and music lead is undoubted even by those of us who apprehend it very imperfectly. It is strange then that anyone should doubt the reality to which religion leads, simply because of his own imperfect religious sympathies.

That then is the first point to understand concerning the nature of faith. Both faith and knowledge are daily necessities of our present existence, and in the main what we call knowledge is an attitude built on the past, whilst faith is built on the future. But the distinction between past and future is being rubbed out every day; what was yesterday's future is to-morrow's past. Faith therefore has experience behind it to support it and give it confidence. Whilst its face is turned to the future, it has its feet set firmly in the past. Like the great grey pillars of Stonehenge, monuments of the religious faith of some of the very early inhabitants of our land, set firm upon the ground and pointing to the skies, faith is rooted deep in the experience of men, and points upwards and ahead to the Reality that lies beyond and behind our bounds.

In the second place, we may distinguish faith and hope. Hope is the expectation that things will turn out as we desire. Faith is the expectation that they will be for the best. There is much less will in hope than in faith. We hope easily and readily, but faith involves a big struggle of our wills, the will to believe that the best is to be. Hope may seem to be disappointed. Faith is never disappointed. It is sure that whether we receive what we desire or not, we get the best, and after all that is what we want. We hope for one thing only, the best. Faith is the assurance that we get it. Hope may seem disappointed, because, often enough, things do not turn out as we hoped. But faith is the assurance that after all we get what we hoped for, and that is the best, even if not in the way we hoped for it.

There is a verse in the Bible which says that faith is the assurance, or, in another translation, the substance of things hoped for. Within the present century, an entirely new study of the language of the New Testament has sprung up, based on the discovery, amongst the sand-buried rubbish dumps of ancient Egypt, of a large number of documents, notices, bills, letters and such like, written about the same time as the New Testament and in the same colloquial Greek. The word which our versions translate as " substance " or " assurance " occurs in those documents with the meaning " title-deeds." This is what the verse would mean to those

who read it in those days—Faith is the title-deeds of things hoped for. The things we hope for are not yet in our hands, but faith gives the title-deeds that secure our ultimate possession of them, and prove our right. It is hardly possible to find a more striking metaphor than that to describe the character of faith. During the war I met a man of deep religious faith whose only son was killed in action. The father had always been so cheerily confident all would be well that his friends feared the news would break his faith. He simply said, "I hoped for his return, and I couldn't see it possible that it could be best he should not return. Now I see I made a mistake. I don't understand, and yet I believe the best has happened, none the less."

That example brings out the essential character of faith. It is not a kind of valorous despair, a leap in the dark when the light of reason is extinguished. It is, as the Bible puts it, what men live by, an attitude, tone, or temper towards life. Most of life's failures are failures of faith. I heard recently of a man who through sheer misfortune and on account of others' wrongdoing finds himself reduced from wealth to bankruptcy, and at the age of fifty has lost all the fruits of his life's work. Yet he is out on the road now, travelling for a firm to whom he once gave large orders. "I'm the same fellow I ever was," he says, "though I find I've less friends than I thought. Still I show them

I'm not done for yet." That is Mr. Greatheart indeed, and in the quaint old phrase of the Prayer Book, we'll say " We wish you good luck in the name of the Lord." Yet many other men would have collapsed with their business under those circumstances, and blamed their failure to their misfortunes. That man, however, is likely yet to make good, because he has not lost faith in himself and his possibilities. Faith is not so much a matter of belief as of life. It represents our attitude to life as a whole. Some men face life in one way, some in another, according to their faith in themselves, in their fellow-men, and in God.

In the light of this, the psychology of what many psychologists call the faith-state, is clear. Religious faith is staking our lives upon the goodness of God, that is, believing in God's goodness and acting accordingly. It is commonly thought that the characteristic of the sceptic is lack of faith. This is not so. His characteristic is simply another kind of faith. In those cases where the issue of faith involves no action, there can be just negative doubt. Some people believe there are men on Mars; personally I am a sceptic in that matter, but that's the end of it. Some say there are men there, some say there's not enough evidence for thinking so. That's a simple case of faith and doubt. But supposing a house is on fire, and some believe there are people still in it, I should not be justified in declining to act because I

was no evidence that there were. If I refuse to aid in the rescue I am justified only by a positive faith the house is empty and that therefore the proposed attempt at rescue is a needless risk. That is the true analogy. The sceptic who refuses to act on the belief that there is love at the heart of the universe is maintaining his faith that this is the right attitude to take. It is not a question of having faith or having none. It is simply which type of faith we adopt, which attitude towards life, religious faith or a sceptic's faith.

It is a perfectly clear-cut issue, for to decline to act at all drafts us automatically on the side of the sceptical. Both the belief that God is good, or that He is neutral towards us are beliefs that must be assumed rather than proved. But one or other must be acted upon, and whichever we accept, we accept by faith. That shows why faith does not mean believing this or that, but rather describes an attitude towards the Holy, the Reality that lies behind the Universe, an attitude that reflects the whole tone and temper of our life.

It is at this point that the subject of worship enters. If we chose the sceptic's faith, our talk would end here, for the only sequel would be to greet the unseen with a sneer, or a gesture of defiance, or a studied disregard, according to our temperament. But if we accept faith in the religious sense, the matter does not end. Such faith shows its reality by its actions towards God,

in other words, in worship. We must not interpret that word too narrowly. Let it include whatever response those who believe in God may make towards Him.

If then, this is what we are to understand by worship, the relation between faith and worship is very close. If faith is for us a general inward attitude to God, worship is the outward expression of it, and that expression will include everything in our lives, thoughts and acts, public and private, that are expressive of the faith-state. A psychologist would regard the connection of faith and worship indispensable to both. A faith that gets no expression makes little impression on us or others, whilst worship that is not the expression of living faith is habit or custom, which may linger long, but will certainly not have much effect. It is a psychological commonplace that states of mind always tend to find outward expression, and if denied this and repressed, either tend to pass away, or to show themselves in some unconscious conflict which sets up some nervous trouble.

In the light of this, it is most interesting to look at the present state of religion in this country. I can find no evidence that there is less religion inwardly than there was. Indeed there seems to be more, even if outwardly there is less expression of religion in worship. At any rate, Fleet Street has no doubt whatever that religious questions provide good copy, and Fleet Street has an excellent judgment in such matters.

Those who say this is an irreligious age, judge by the ostensibly expressed piety of the 'fifties and 'sixties of the last century. Judged by truer standards of what constitutes religion, there is much more religion in Great Britain now than then, more liberal, intelligent thought and belief about God, yet undoubtedly such outward expression as church attendance has declined; for whilst admitting it is easy to exaggerate this, none the less the fact remains, and from a psychological standpoint is puzzling. Where do the energies of modern men's faith go? They have faith, and faith needs expression. If it is not finding expression through the old channels of worship in church, what becomes of it?

In part I think it has passed into channels of social service. When Wilberforce and Shaftesbury and the social pioneers of those days began their crusades, there was plenty of opposition inside as well as outside the Churches, though it is only fair to add that their supporters came almost entirely from the religious public. To-day, many men are putting their faith in God, into the service of humanity, and if we have, in any sense, a right conception of God, we shall count that an act of worship well pleasing to Him.

But we cannot cover every case in this way. There are thousands, perhaps millions, who have certainly some religious faith, but are busied in no special acts of social service, and join in no public worship. Many will contend that public

worship is quite unnecessary, and that to worship God by a good life, or by contemplation of nature, is just as fitting an expression of religion. We can leave the preachers to say whether that is theologically sound, but undoubtedly it is open to criticism from the psychological standpoint. From that standpoint, worship appears as connected with the group instincts. Man is by nature a social creature, and many psychological mechanisms of his mind are built to respond to impulses from the group. Worship, or something corresponding to it, is manifest in practically all forms of religion known to man. The man, therefore, who joins in no religious fellowship and gives his religious feelings no outlet in public worship, is starving the social side of his religious life. He finds religion interesting to him, and yet it is likely to be tantalisingly unsatisfying. The chances are he blames the wrong reason. The true reason is that he has too much religion in his nature and too little means of giving it expression.

Another indication of the same thing is found amongst College students. Few are indifferent to religion, but many are perplexed by it and critical of all its expressions. They seldom seek information about it, but constantly discuss religious problems. Religion seems to many of them nothing but a problem. Of course in college days, the intellectual aspect of most matters is naturally uppermost, but no religious life ever flourished on a diet of problems.

Amongst those engaged in active social and religious enterprise, however, problems are much less discussed, and when they are, they are discussed as one discusses a puzzle of which he knows the answer, but is not sure of the way in which it is proved. From the psychological point of view the reason seems to be this. The energies aroused by the religious interests are in the latter case finding a satisfactory outlet in service, whereas the students are spending those energies in discussion of problems which prove interesting matters for debate, but give no satisfaction within. Once more then the same truth re-appears; that a religion that finds no outlet in activity is failing to answer as a religion, and hence its possessor's constant sense of something, often something he knows not what, that is lacking.

Religion needs an expression. Everyone knows of that form of mental unbalance called religious mania, popularly supposed to be due to too much religion. But religion alone never drove anyone insane. Rather is it that insanity sometimes shows itself in abnormal expressions of religion, as it may in abnormal expressions of love, or fear or other things. But there is undoubtedly danger of nervous trouble through too little religion, through repressing religious impulses, and every psychologist meets patients whose neurotic symptoms are due to a religious nature that has been denied the outlet it craves. We are not conducting a come-to-church cam-

paign in these talks but something so universally connected with religion as worship and fellowship cannot be accidentally connected, but must express a natural and normal outlet of religious impulses; and the whole teaching of modern psychology stresses the dangers of the natural impulse that is denied expression of some sort or other. That is why one may freely say that unless those who do not take part in ordinary worship and fellowship, are able to find some substitute for it which satisfies the religion that is in them, it is not surprising if mental uneasiness and unhappiness should be the result.

While the Churches still meet the religious needs of many, there is a vast religious public outside the Churches. Owing largely to the great social and intellectual changes of the past seventy years, organised religion finds itself to-day grappling with the difficulties of a transition period, and while the Churches are trying to carry on "business as usual during alterations," the alterations, though entirely necessary, have meant a great loss to them. Looking at the situation to-day from the psychological standpoint, it seems none the less that none of the essential conditions of religious revival are absent, and such a revival is a very real possibility. It is not likely to take the form of any previous revival, but it will come when the man or men shall be ready to offer to the great religious public at present unattached or half attached to the Churches, some way of

expressing the religious side of their life that appeals to their imagination as the ordinary forms fail to do. The religious faith of the British race has written itself very deeply in their history and it is living still in the hearts of millions. The materials are waiting for the hand that will light the flame, and it may be sooner than we think that the Fiery Cross will go forth, and those outside the Churches will wake to a new day of faith.

CHAPTER XVIII

THE MYSTERY AND MASTERY OF MIND: PSYCHOLOGY AND OURSELVES

Our previous chapters have dealt with various aspects of our minds. This last is concerned with the mind itself, and some of those questions which remain unsolved mysteries, the question of its origin, of its relation to the brain, of its future; whilst, at the close, we will see what general principles psychology can suggest as helping to the mastery of mind, that is to say, its control and efficient working.

This is an age of marvels, and yet there is no marvel in the whole of creation more wonderful than the human mind. Every marvel of invention is the product of mind. The marvels of the universe, which microscope and telescope, astronomy and mathematics discover, things which make us realise our own littleness in the universe, none the less testify to the wonder of mind itself. For it is a sign of the greatness of man that he has been able to discover those very facts that are said to show his littleness. If we turn then to some of the facts which our minds have found out about themselves, we can see how far the mind has been able to

discover its own history, and the laws of its own working.

We know that there is an intimate partnership between the mind and the physical brain, but it would be fascinating to know a little more about that partnership. When does it begin, what are its terms, which is the dominant partner, and what happens when the partnership ends? No one can answer all or any of these questions as we should like them answered, but let us see how far we can go towards an answer.

First let us look at the bodily partner. The brain is a mass of white pulpy substance, with nuclei, or studs, of grey matter bedded in it, whilst a thin sheet of grey matter, not smoothly spread, but in convolutions or crinkles, covers the surface. This is called the cortex, or rind, and intelligence is certainly connected with it, for the more the grey matter, in other words, the more crinkly the cortex, the more the mental capacity, as a study of the brains of the lower and the higher animals and of man, shows us. The brain is like a sponge or honeycomb, composed of myriads of tiny cells, each separate, and all interconnected. It is estimated that there are as many as 14,000 million in the human brain. One need not imagine that every cell is a pigeon-hole for some bit of knowledge, but at any rate, even from the physical standpoint, there is plenty of room in the brain, and it is lucky that no Chancellor in search for revenue is likely to be able to impose an un-

developed brain area tax! The average human brain weighs fifty ounces in a man and forty-four in a woman; but let no male exult prematurely, for to make a fair comparison, we must recollect there is a ratio between brain and body weight, and making allowance for that, a slight preponderance favours the other sex! It is popularly supposed that large heads are a sign of intelligence, but there is no good evidence of this. True, a skull under seventeen inches in circumference is generally that of a mentally deficient person, but we shall probably find, if we make the palpitating measurement in private, that we have some inches to spare! A very small brain, and an over-large one, may alike indicate abnormality.

So much then as regards the outward characteristics of the brain. The next question is how and when do brain and mind enter into partnership? In the days when creation was thought to have been of complete species at once, it was answered that when man was made, his mind was created with him. Now we think of man as the product of a long process of development, and mind represents accordingly a gradual growth. Our scientists can trace, more or less, the story of that evolution on the physical side, though even here we must confess that whilst there is every reason for believing in the general notion of evolution, we must be careful not to dogmatise about the methods, for, as a recent writer said, we seem to know less about them

to-day than Darwin did. When we speak of mental evolution, our difficulties are greater by far. We know a little about bodily heredity, and, physically, we are very much the product of our race, but mental heredity is entirely another matter. In a couple of generations, the whole psychology of a nation may change. Every mission field shows that. People who for untold generations have lived in an atmosphere of magic, superstition and cruelty can be transformed, and may become peaceful, law-abiding and docile. It is easy enough to quote individual instances to the contrary, but when we recollect that even amongst ourselves,

> "The Colonel's lady and Judy O'Grady
> Are sisters under their skins."

The marvel is that so vast a transformation can take place in so short a period as a single generation or so. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, but he can change entirely his mental outlook.

If it is replied that, none the less, there are racial characteristics that show little change, the answer is, I think, that even this stability is chiefly the result of tradition and training. The common stock of instincts belongs alike to all human beings. How those instincts are expressed is to a large extent a matter of national habit and custom. There are inborn mental differences no doubt, but in mental heredity the inborn factor counts far less than environment

and training, whereas physically the inborn inheritance is all powerful.

Nor can we assumed that what is acquired by one generation may be inherited by the next. We commonly do assume it, but scientists regard this as a very doubtful matter, and the great majority are still unconvinced of its possibility, or at least of its happening except in very rare and unusual circumstances. It would help us a great deal if we could demonstrate it, but there is not enough evidence to allow us this tempting way of linking up the story of mental development from one generation to another.

All we can say of the development and transmission of mind up the scale of life, is that possibly wherever there is life there is some trace of mind, and that mind develops step by step as life evolves into more complex forms. The germ of mind may exist therefore in the lowliest creatures, but whether we should call this and our own minds alike by the term mind is another question. As regards the individual mind, all the sense-organs, which are the gateways of the brain to the outer world, are mature some while before birth, and some have thought it possible that experience begins before we are born. That is speculative, but it is certain that " the baby new to earth and sky " soon begins to collect an experience after its birth. As William James graphically put it, " the baby assailed by eyes, ears, nose, skin and entrails all

at once, feels it all as one great booming, buzzing confusion!" It is these stimuli from the outer world that stir our minds into activity, yet the notion that the outer world records impressions of itself upon us, as the light on a sensitised plate, is entirely wrong. Rather are our minds a factory which receive so much raw material from sensations, and out of this build up the complex world of our experience. It is not the stimuli from the outer world that count. It is the response our minds make to them, and until our baby begins to "sit up and take notice," all the sights and sounds around him mean no more to him than they do to his cradle, but the fact that his brain weighs some twelve and a half per cent. of his body weight, whilst ours weighs only about two per cent., shows how well equipped he is for developments ahead.

If we now ask what are the terms of the partnership, and which is the dominant partner, we are reminded of a curious notion most people have that the mind or soul, and for the purpose of psychology we may count these the same, is *within* the body somehow. It may be millions of miles away. There is no more reason for thinking one than the other. To ask *where* the mind is implies that the mind is an object that can be localised in space. Yet space is no boundary to the mind. Whilst you are in your chair, your mind can girdle the universe quicker by far than Ariel. It can rest in Australia, China, India, the Milky Way and back in a

second or so. The partners certainly work together, but wireless itself should remind us that the voice we hear in our room belongs to a body very far away, and in like manner we need not imprison our minds in our bodies, even in imagination, in order to understand their partnership.

But which partner is dominant? The old crude materialism said that the brain generated thought as the liver generated bile, but as no anatomist has yet produced a beaker full of thoughts for our inspection, we need not take that notion seriously. Many, however, simply because a blow on the head may alter a person's character, or a growth on the brain may produce insanity, are ready to say confidently that the mind is but a function of the brain, and dependent on it for its existence.

If, when you are listening-in, the speaker's voice suddenly stops, it is clear that there are two possibilities. Something may have happened to the speaker. I do not suggest that an announcer goaded beyond endurance, has suddenly gagged him, because I am sure no announcer would do such a thing, however bored! Let us take the milder possibility that the speaker has suddenly lost his voice. It is certainly a possibility, but it is far more probable that something has gone wrong with your set. The brain is like the wireless set. It is the instrument through which the mind expresses itself. If something goes wrong with the

instrument, the expression can no longer be conveyed. But that is no reason for assuming that the mind has ceased to exist. The mind may be, and I think is, as much independent of the brain, as the speaker is independent of the transmission. He cannot broadcast without it, but when he ceases to broadcast, he does not cease to exist.

That links up with the remaining question, what happens when the mind finally breaks partnership with the body? Does it go out into nothingness like the candle flame? But if we ask a scientist about that candle flame, he will assure us that what were particles of flame haven't gone into nothingness, they have simple changed their form, that neither matter nor energy can be annihilated. All we can do is to transform them. Then how is it possible for life or mind to be annihilated?

Nature gives us no parallel whatever for thinking that what is can ever become what is not. It would be an inconceivable miracle if it were. One cannot understand what is meant literally by annihilation. You kill a fly. The atoms of its body decay and take other forms, but they remain in the universe. I am equally unable to believe that even the life of a fly can go into nothingness. It may go back, as the atoms of its body do, to the stock or pool from whence it came, but it seems meaningless to say that anything that exists can change into nothingness, that something can become nothing.

So too, therefore, with mind. When the partnership dissolves and the mind no longer uses its bodily instrument the brain, there is no reason at all for thinking the mind is annihilated. Rather is the question whether it persists as it was, or is transformed altogether.

Some are well content to think that after death the finite mind is lost in the infinite mind of God. Yet nothing on earth is more truly to be called real than personality; and it seems strange to think that personality develops and marks out its possessor as unique, only to disappear with the disintegration of the body. The more outstanding the personality the more is the body merely its instrument; and the personality may survive to employ some other instrument. But here we have passed beyond psychology to uncharted seas of thought.

Let us turn now to the question of the mastery of mind. What we have said of its history, and incidentally, too, of its mystery, will provide a starting-point for the few things one can say here of the mastery of our minds. By that I mean the possession and employment of our mental powers at their utmost efficiency. To attain that, three things are needful. We must have the right relationship between the mind and the body, between our mind and other minds, and between our mind and God.

First then the mind-body partnership must be one of co-operation. The mind must be head of the firm, and the body a willing friend.

The evils of the body mastering the mind are the commonplace of moralists, but a masterful mind that overstrains or overworks the body is just as much an enemy to the partnership.

If mental exercises can help to mastery of our minds, there is no reason against adopting them, though just as outdoor recreation is better for the body than " physical jerks " and a bedroom gymnasium, so a natural life in which physical and mental work and recreation are well-balanced, is better than the best system of mental exercises ever invented.

Whatever the means, the body must be trained to co-operate with the mind. The body acquires habits that may or may not be good servants of our will. A sound set of good habits saves us endless conflict and time wasted in deliberation. To take an unheroic but pertinent example, getting up in the morning is simply a question of habit. Resolve that at 7 or 7.30 you rise without exception, as regularly and as punctually to the minute as the Scotch express leaves the terminus. Do so for a while and it will become as difficult for you to stay in bed at 7.1 or 7.31 as it is impossible for other people to get up in time. The will to rise becomes automatic in the bodily expression, and limbs and muscles move at the appointed time without any mental command bidding them do so.

We must recollect that our minds do not begin in a position of authority. In childhood they are largely at the mercy of instinct and

impulse and bodily needs. We may learn in time to control the physical side, but, left uncontrolled, it will either master the mind, or hamper it so that it can never work efficiently. How many brilliant men have been spoilt through sheer bodily laziness! There is no quick road to control, but system is a sure and safe way. Personally, as a student, I could maintain my study only by mapping out the work on a schedule day by day and keeping rigidly to it, or trying to get ahead, so that when a bad attack of spring-fever and wanderlust on a sunny day, made me hate books, I could indulge in the luxury of a day off, because I was a day ahead of my self-imposed schedule. A mind disciplined by system, like the lad disciplined by business who afterwards becomes controller of the business, may grow with its system until it becomes controller rather than controlled. At the same time the body must at all costs be kept physically fit. A large percentage of nervous breakdowns are due to the mind's struggle with a physically worn-out body. The old Latin tag, "*mens sana in corpore sano*," a healthy mind in a healthy body, may be a platitude, but it is certain that unless both are healthy together, the mind is unlikely to be healthy apart.

The second requisite for mental control is a right relationship to others. Our minds developed by their contact with other minds, and the social consciousness of our day is

strongly marked in every one of us. Most of us, however, are too ready to accept others' valuation of ourselves, to wear the labels they attach to us. Another mistake we make is constant sensitiveness to the opinion of others, of thinking too much of what others think of us, whilst the plain truth is that no one thinks half as much about you as you think he does. He is far more concerned with himself! St. Paul said it was a small thing to be judged of any man's judgment, yet few have learnt this, least of all those who truculently declare they don't care a hang what anyone says about them. That is a certain sign they do. As a matter of fact we all care, and rightly so. The important point is to balance self-knowledge with others' opinion. "Know thyself," said the Greeks. There is no better maxim. Judge yourself as you would judge another, noting impartially the strength and weakness of your character. Compare your abilities and disabilities with those of other people of your own grade, and do not account for their superiority as due to luck, favour, or self-advertising. Few gain much, fewer still keep what they gain, by such means. On the other hand, realise when you have any superiority and try to develop that particular gift. It is a curious thing that most of us pride ourselves more on things in which we have no particular title to expertness than in our own sphere. I am not much moved if anyone charges me with being

a bad psychologist, but I am deeply indignant if someone reflects on my ability to change gear quietly! To return, however, to the chief point, a sense of our own abilities is not conceit. It becomes conceit only when we boast of them in comparison with those of others. A mind that knows its own power and limits is a mind that will work within those powers undisturbed by others, and attempt the possible not the impossible.

The last point is the need of right adjustment towards God. In the first place that will give a sense of what I may call the "worth-whileness" of life, compared with the depressing sense of futility and waste that oppresses so many. Let us take two pictures of man's place in the universe. The first is in the words of Strauss: "In the enormous machine of the universe, amid the incessant whirl and hiss of its jagged iron wheels, amid the deafening crash of its ponderous stamps and hammers, in the midst of this terrific commotion, man, a helpless and defenceless creature, finds himself placed, not secure for a moment that on some unguarded motion, a wheel may not seize and rend him, or a hammer crush him to powder. This sense of abandonment is at first very awful." The second picture is this. "Behold the birds of the heaven, that they sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; and your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not of much more value than they?" The

enormous difference between the sense of living and working in a friendly and an unfriendly universe is a factor in mental balance which has been fully recognised even by those psychologists who hold that religious belief is a delusion, for example Freud, who thinks religion a social and psychological necessity.

Still more religious faith delivers a man from the need of judging himself solely by human standards and by teaching him on the one hand his importance as a co-worker with God in the purposes of the Kingdom of God, and on the other hand, his own frailty and sinfulness, and need for dependence on God, it satisfies both the impulse to self-appreciation and the impulse to self-abasement, and in doing so provides a means of avoiding that conflict between the two, which is the cause of so much nervous trouble. Our study of religion in the light of psychology brings us at the end, and indeed throughout to see more fully than ever the truth of St. Augustine's famous words, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and restless are our hearts until they find rest in Thee."

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